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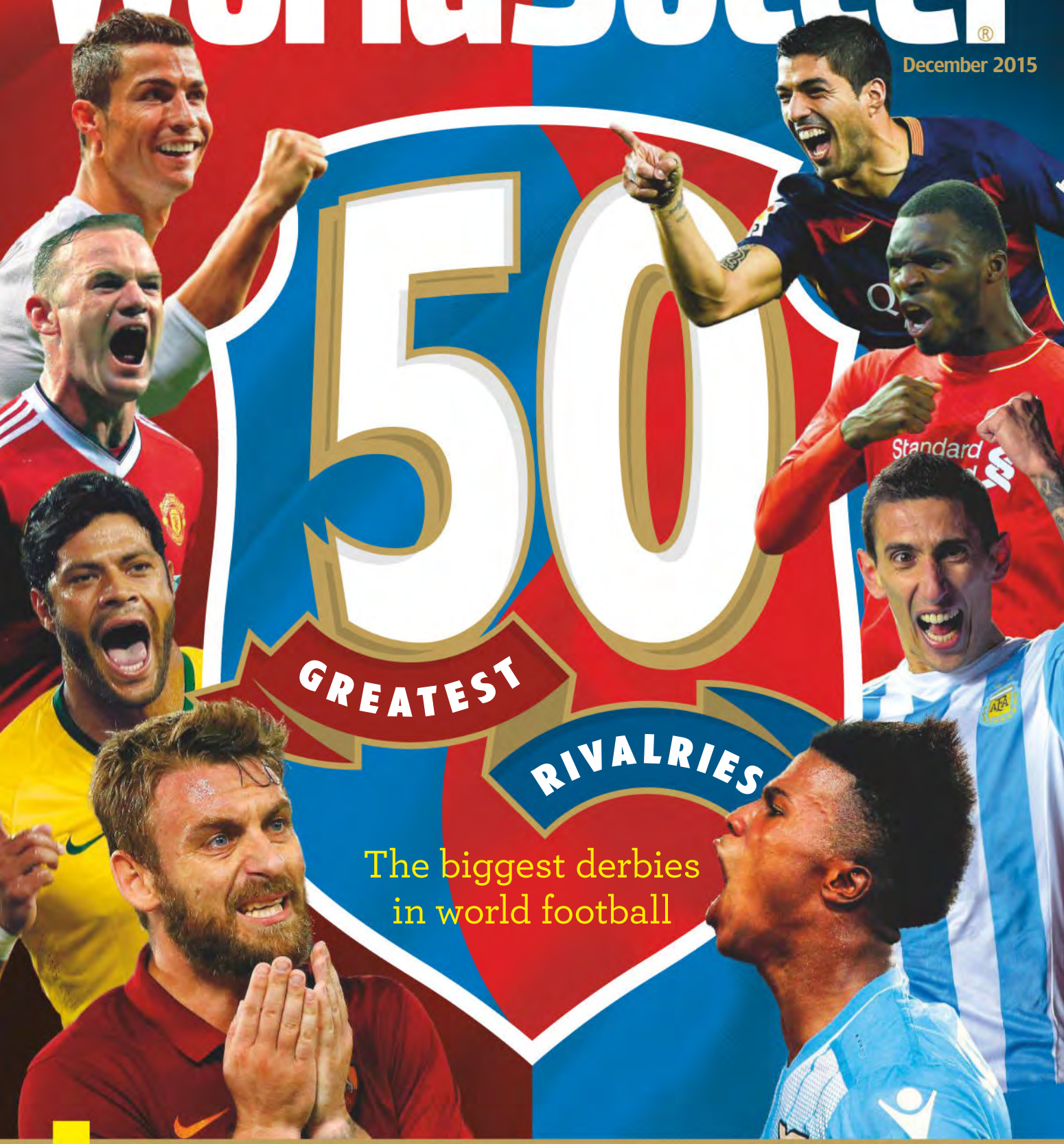

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The biggest derbies in world football

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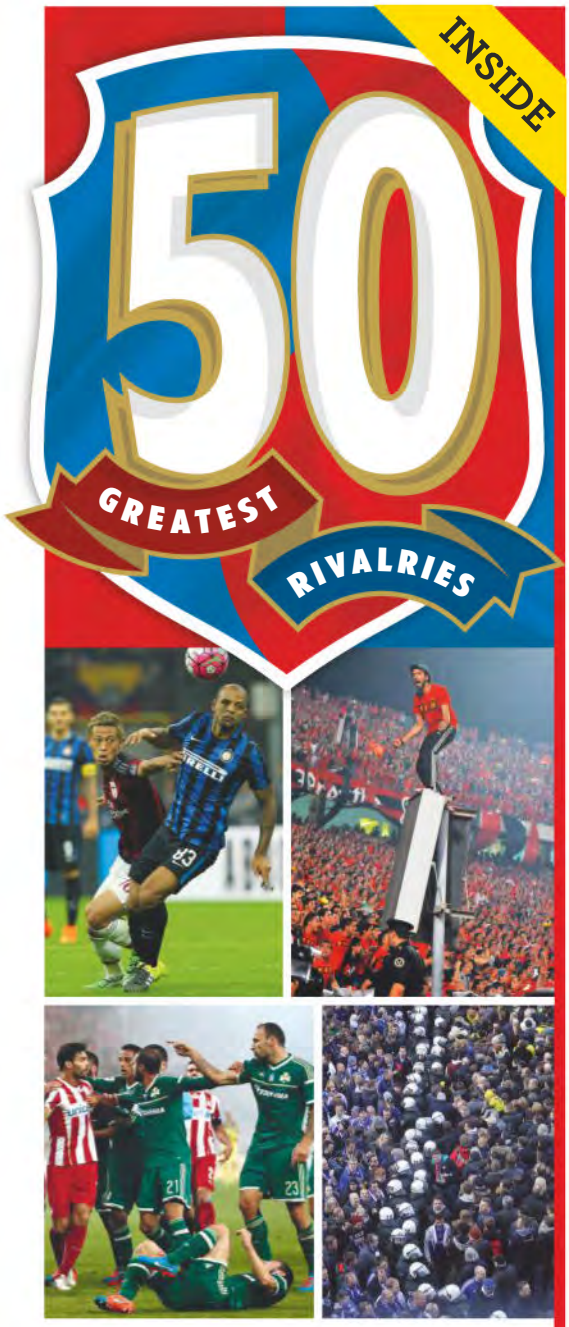

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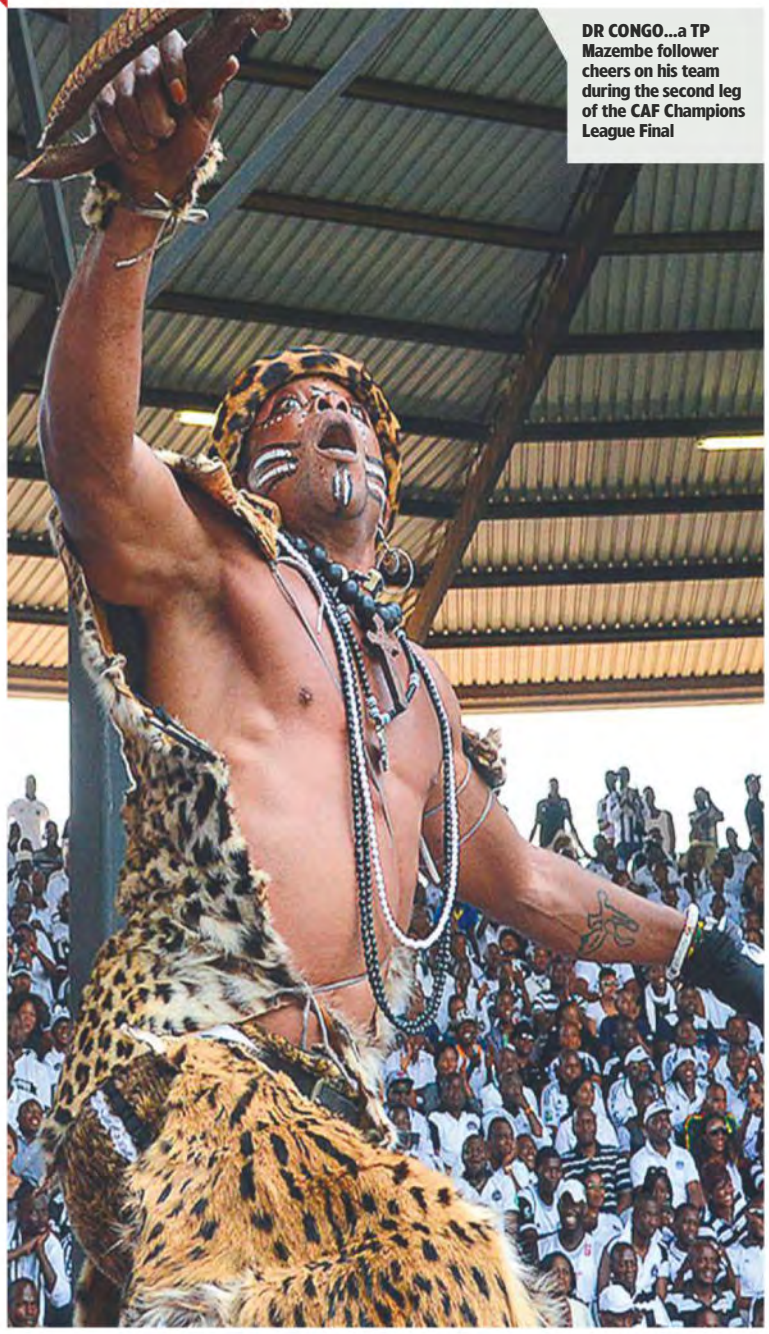
In Pictures

The global game caught on camera

ENGLAND...(left to right) Paul Pogba, Lassana Diarra and Eliaquim Mangala gather their thoughts during the rendition of *La Marseillaise* that was played at Wembley ahead of the friendly between England and France, in the aftermath of the Paris terrorist attacks

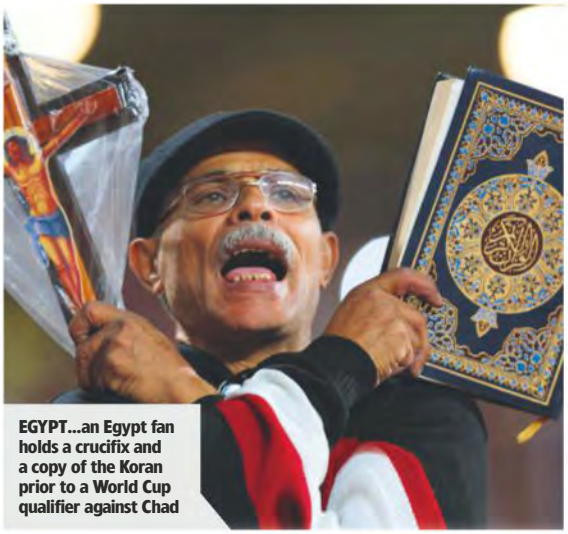


DR CONGO...a TP Mazembe follower cheers on his team during the second leg of the CAF Champions League Final

HONDURAS...Luis Garrido (in white) of Honduras suffers a broken leg against Mexico

ARGENTINA...Boca Juniors' Luciano Fabian Monzon celebrates his goal, at home to Tigre, which secured the title

SLOVENIA...visiting Ukraine fans celebrate qualifying for the Euro 2016 finals



EGYPT...an Egypt fan holds a crucifix and a copy of the Koran prior to a World Cup qualifier against Chad

ITALY...Bologna (red/blue) and Roma in the pouring rain at the Stadio Renato Dall'Ara

PICTURES OF THE MONTH QR CODE

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FROM THE EDITOR

The nature of modern football means that derby matches now happen more frequently than in the past. They are manna for the TV marketeers but for those directly involved they are not always a positive experience. Glenn Hoddle once claimed that it was harder for a London club to win the English league title because of the high number of draining local derbies that are played in the capital each season.

That may be a questionable theory but there is no denying that rivalries are part of the lifeblood of the game: energising, enthralling and agonising in equal measure. In the past month, we have witnessed "live" such delights as Real Madrid-Barcelona, Sweden-Denmark, Dortmund-Schalke and Argentina-Brazil.

> There is no denying that rivalries are the lifeblood of the game: energising, enthralling and entertaining

In a special feature this month (page 37), we take an in-depth look at the game's biggest rivalries, as well as some that are less well-known but deserve a wider audience. It is by no means a definitive list, but we hope it provokes, entertains and informs.

Next month, we announce the results of our annual World Soccer Awards, now in their 34th year. As always, the edition will be available in a number of different formats, including the iPad (right).

Gavin Hamilton, Editor

10 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS THIS MONTH

1 Barcelona thrash Real Madrid at the Bernabeu ..... page 24
2 Hungary win Euro 2016 play-off to end 30-year hoodoo ..... page 32
3 Football pays respects to Paris terrorist victims ..... page 28
4 Ecuador top the South American World Cup qualifying table ..... page 109
5 Guangzhou Evergrande win the Asian Champions League ..... page 116
6 The Club World Cup kicks off in Japan ..... page 104
7 Blatter and Platini facing lengthy bans from football ..... page 16
8 Nigeria are crowned world under-17 champions ..... page 118
9 Norrkoping win Swedish league for the first time since 1989 ..... page 120
10 African World Cup qualifiers produce scares for big guns ..... page 110

Disgraced...Aldo Van der Laan (below left)

HOLLAND

Twente president quits over player contracts leaks

Aldo Van der Laan stepped down as president of Dutch club Twente after leaked documents revealed agreements with a Malta-based company, Doyen Sports Investments, regarding the third-party ownership of several of the Eredivise side's players.

According to documents posted on the Portuguese *Football Leaks* website, Twente received $5.3million in exchange for between 10 and 50 per cent of the transfer rights to seven of their players.

Five of the players listed on the contract have since been sold, including midfielder Dusan Tadic, who joined Premier League outfit Southampton in July 2014 for a reported £10m fee.

FIFA has since outlawed third-party ownership of players.

Other apparently genuine documents that appeared online revealed that the fee paid by Monaco to Atletico Madrid for Colombian striker

"There's much potential for more revenue, millions of dollars of it"

Tokyo Sexwale, the South African candidate for the FIFA presidency, proposes jersey sponsorship for national teams

Radamel Falcao was €43m. At the time, the fee was reported to be much higher.

Doyen spent €10m for a 33.3 per cent stake in Falcao's economic rights. When he was sold two years later, the company netted a €4m profit.

Doyen is currently in dispute with Sporting Lisbon over the Portuguese club's refusal to hand over a share of the fee for the transfer of Marco Rojo to Manchester United in 2014.

Other leaked documents revealed that a Luxembourg-based company, Gol Football Luxembourg, made a profit of €6.2m on the sale of economic rights of Colombian midfielder James Rodriguez to Porto.

In an apparently genuine document dated January 2013, Porto also agreed to pay agent Pini Zahavi five per cent of a fee from any future sale of Rodriguez. Another document appears to be an invoice for €2m from Gol Football Luxembourg to Porto.

In May 2013, it was announced that Rodriguez would leave Porto for Monaco for a fee that was reported to be €45m.

John Holmesdale

Named...Dusan Tadic

HEROES & VILLAINS

ADAM KWARASEY

The goalkeeper slotted home the 21st spot-kick and saved the 22nd as Portland Timbers beat Sporting Kansas City in the longest penalty shoot-out in MLS history, in a play-off round to earn a place in the Western Conference semi-finals.

Spot on...keeper Adam Kwarasey

FRANCE

"*Les Bleus*" slept at the Stade de France after their friendly game in a show of solidarity with the visitors, Germany, following the terrorist attacks in Paris on November 13.

IKER CASILLAS

Became the first goalkeeper to keep 100 international clean sheets with his shut-out in Spain's 2-0 victory against England – a game in which the 34-year-old won his 165th cap.

FELIPE CAICEDO

His goal in Ecuador's 3-1 win away to Venezuela saw him become the first player from his country to score in five consecutive World Cup qualifiers and tied the South American record with Chile's Jorge Aravena.

Five in a row...Felipe Caicedo of Ecuador

GREEK FANS

Clashes between fans of Panathinaikos and Olympiakos caused the Athens derby to be postponed. Ref Andreas Pappas waited for half an hour before making the decision after home fans had thrown flares onto the pitch.

Off...hooliganism saw the Athens derby postponed

DAVID LUIZ

The Brazil defender was booked for throwing an elbow at an opponent in the 1-1 draw against Argentina before a dangerous tackle two minutes later led to a red card. His boss, Dunga, said: "He deserved to be sent off"

No excuse...David Luiz was sent off against Argentina

TURKEY FANS

A minute's silence to remember the victims of the Paris terrorist attacks was disrupted by booing from fans before the Turkish national team's friendly against Greece in Istanbul.

GANESH THAPA

The former president of the Nepalese FA was banned from football for 10 years for embezzling football development money.

"They said they were going to send me to retirement. I sent their whole nation into retirement"

Zlatan Ibrahimovic after helping Sweden to beat Denmark in their Euro 2012 qualifying play-off

GOALS we'd like to see again

To see video footage of these goals, and many more that we have selected, scan the QR code using any free QR reader that can be downloaded to your smartphone. You can also see the videos by logging on to http://po.st/f92RRB

1 LEONARDO BLANCHARD
Frosinone v Genoa
Scores with an overhead kick while still on the floor, after his first attempt was blocked by a defender.

2 MARIO GASPAR
Spain v England
An acrobatic overhead kick following a pass from Cesc Fabregas.

3 ANDRES GUARDADO
Mexico v El Salvador
Perfectly executed left-foot free-kick into the top right-hand corner of the net.

4 KENWYNE JONES
Trinidad & Tobago v Guatemala
Meets a cross from the left with a well-taken first time volley in a World Cup qualifier.

5 DELE ALLI
England v France
Begins the move with a crunching tackle and finishes it with a fantastic strike into the top corner for his first international goal.

6 ANDRES INIESTA
Barcelona v Real Madrid
Exchanges passes with Luis Suarez before striking a powerful shot into the top corner from the edge of the penalty area.

WINNERS

NORRKOPING
The Swedish club won the Allsvenskan league title for the first time in 26 years.

LUIS FELIPE SCOLARI
AFC Champions League winner with Guangzhou Evergrande, only he and Marcello Lippi have lifted the World Cup and two different continental titles.

CARLOS TEVEZ
Won an eighth league title – in four different countries – and his second Argentinian championship with Boca Juniors.

LOSERS

CHELSEA
Seven defeats in their opening 13 league matches was their worst run at the start of a season since relegation from the top flight in 1979.

LYON
The French hopefuls crashed out of Europe after finishing bottom of their Champions League group.

BRAGA
Players from the Portuguese team all had their boots stolen the night before their Europa League game away at Marseille.

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"I am completely sick of it. What we are trying to build here is being broken down by a small group of people in the stadium"

Utrecht owner Frans Van Seumeren threatens to leave the club because of the racist chants of some fans

Notebook

Highlights from some of our regular on-line contributions

ITALY

Roma's Bosnian midfielder Miralem Pjanic is good but even he cannot walk on water, quipped *La Gazzetta dello Sport* after his club's 2-2 draw with Bologna.

The point is that the game was played in a ferocious, insistent downpour which made the pitch almost unplayable. Roma coach Rudi Garcia complained that the game should have been abandoned, saying it was "a parody of football...water polo played with your feet".

In the end, Garcia consoled himself with the thought that no one had been injured, something which, in the circumstances, represented "good news".

Paddy Agnew

Making a splash...Roma (white) and Bologna

SPAIN

Rafa Benitez is rather defensive about accusations he is defensive.

His final press conference before the *clasico* was packed with short, spiky answers, in which he denied reports Real Madrid's players had called a meeting to ask him to play more offensively against Barcelona.

When a *Radio Marca* journalist said: "I'm telling you the story is true", Benitez replied: "I'm telling you it is false". He also insisted: "The most offensive team is the one that takes most shots and scores most goals."

Sid Lowe

Under fire... Rafa Benitez

BRAZIL

With five rounds to go, the Brazilian championship was effectively decided on November 1.

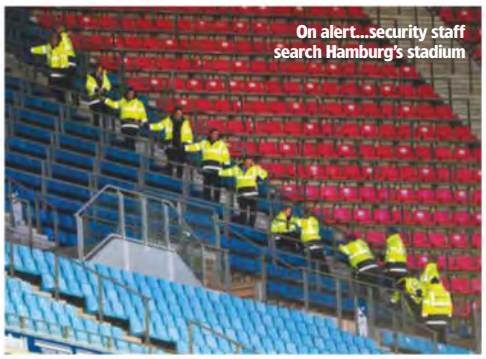
Corinthians took an eight-point lead to Belo Horizonte to meet second-placed Atletico Mineiro, who are usually so strong in the tight Independencia stadium – but the match turned into a 90-minute advert for the virtues of the visitors.

Under coach Tite, so unwisely overlooked by the national team after the World Cup, Corinthians are a mature side with a consolidated and attractive style. They took Atletico apart to win 3-0.

Attacking midfielders Jadson and Renato Augusto were imperious and centre-forward Vagner Love, a target of much criticism, also impressed.

Corinthians' excellence was acknowledged with the presence of four of their players in the Brazil squad to face Argentina and Peru in World Cup qualifiers.

Tim Vickery



On alert...security staff search Hamburg's stadium

GERMANY

Following the terrorist attacks in Paris and the cancellation of the Germany-Holland friendly in Hanover due to a "concrete" bomb threat, the tighter protective safeguards were inevitably the order of the day as the Bundesliga resumed.

In Hamburg, where security staff were increased from 450 to 600, everyone attending the game against Borussia Dortmund had to have at least one full body search, all bags were meticulously searched, firecrackers and other pyrotechnical devices were confiscated and sniffer dogs were twice let loose in the ground to look for explosives.

Elsewhere, it was the same high-alert story. The entrance controls at Stuttgart were so tight and painstaking that the kick-off had to be delayed by 15 minutes, while at Wolfsburg even the cars in the VW Arena's VIP park were examined.

Ironic, then, that the weekend's football was anything but free of violence.

Before Schalke's 3-1 home defeat by Bayern Munich, almost 200 fans of the away team and Ruhr rivals Bochum were arrested after a ferocious attack on a ticket office at the Veltins Arena, while Werder Bremen fans ran amok on a train en route to Wolfsburg and Hanover followers went on the rampage during their trip to Monchengladbach.

Nick Bidwell

Weekly notes from Brazil, Spain, Germany and Italy at **worldsoccer.com**

Paul GARDNER

THE WORLDWIDE VIEW

FIFA's falling apart – and you think the fans give a damn?

D'oh...FIFA and its suspended president, Sepp Blatter, are out of touch with the everyday football fan

I think it's about time that I weighed in with my opinion on the never-ending FIFA scandal. So here goes. Above all, this scandal is a colossal bore. Because it has nothing to do with football. Nothing.

A dozen or so guys have been caught, or may have been caught, with their hands in the till. A nefarious activity that seems, these days, to be even more widespread than football itself. How much money? A few million dollars – actually peanuts when set alongside the billions that the big banks have been gambling with.

> When, in its 107-year history, did the FBI ever show the slightest interest in football?

Not a football scandal then, a financial one – and not even a major one at that.

It's mostly money either extracted from commercial companies, or offered by them, as sweeteners to secure marketing and television rights. There might even be a direct football connection here – but despite the feverish attention that has been focused on the matter, no one has yet come up with proof of vote buying and selling in the process of deciding who gets to host the World Cup.

So what effect does the scandal have on the game itself? I'd say none. A year ago there was a pretty good, well-organised World Cup played in Brazil. All the games started on time, all were televised as scheduled, a champion was duly crowned. Would anyone have known the organisation ultimately responsible for this tournament, FIFA, was deeply corrupt and in crisis?

OK, things have got a lot worse since then. We have the sudden intervention of the FBI. Which is further proof that this is not a football matter. When, in its 107-year history, did the FBI ever show the slightest interest in football?

By now there are mountains of guff on the scandal to read – stodgy legal stuff plus endless indignant pontifications and much moralising from the media and righteous public figures. But read all you like; you'll be lucky to find even one reference to the actual playing of the game.

And it is the playing of the sport, that interests the ordinary fans.

We are told that there are over three billion such fans, but it's all quiet on the fan front. The disconnect between the FIFA biggies and the average fan is total. A new FIFA president will be elected in February. This is being treated as the most important election in FIFA history. But my betting is that, for the fans, this is the ultimate non-event.

There are seven candidates – and how many of them are known to the game's three billion fans? Maybe just one: Michel Platini, because he was a star player not that long ago.

Platini is the one candidate who has made an attempt to link FIFA with the sport's fans. He says he wants "a FIFA that is exemplary... that is respected, liked and of the people", and he has hinted that he would like to see the FIFA executive committee include player and club representatives. Maybe fan representatives would be a good idea, too.

But one wonders if there can ever be a close connection between the executive-heavy FIFA in its Swiss stronghold and that global army of three billion fans. Platini's idea of a FIFA that is "of the people" is a nice try, a sturdy Abe-Lincolnesque call for democracy, but is it anything more than empty electioneering?

FIFA is now a multimillion-dollar business enterprise. Inevitably it has grown apart from its enormous fan base, the vast majority of whom do not live in, or even close to, the world of high finance. What they want is a FIFA that can be trusted to ensure that the sport is clean, ie free from game-fixing, is smoothly run and honestly refereed.

On the whole FIFA – despite these recent upheavals – has done a presentable job with all of those aspects. If it seeks a closer link to the fans, it must find ways of directly affecting their interests, which means reining in the profit-seeking marketing side of the game, and working with fans to keep the cost of playing and watching the game within reasonable limits.

If not a FIFA of the people, then certainly it should be a FIFA for the people. WS

Keir RADNEDGE

THE INSIDER

Blatter's hands have touched FIFA at every level

Troubled...Sepp Blatter (standing) and Michel Platini, presidents of FIFA and UEFA respectively, are facing life bans

If Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini are banned from football, as appears increasingly likely, it will not be only their intelligence-insulting financial finagling which will take sole focus.

Both the respective presidents of world federation FIFA and European governing body UEFA deny any wrongdoing but, at the least, they are culpable of massive misjudgement. Clearly they never expected their "arrangement" to be revealed to even their FIFA executive committee colleagues, never mind the world at large.

The investigation which has been undertaken by the ethics committee is a disciplinary procedure within a private organisation and not a formal judicial process, hence the freedom for assessment in a fevered political world – with the forthcoming election of Blatter's presidential successor looming on February 26.

Inevitably, the case prompts questions about the validity of all other decisions made by the two men during the leadership tenures. This means every commercial contract (written or verbal), every development grant and every appointment to staff or committee positions.

Blatter has long pleaded that his hands have been tied and his actions restricted by an ExCo over whose composition he has no say. This is disingenuous. Certainly UEFA delivers its own preferences in terms of delegates to the ExCo, but elsewhere Blatter has been able to interfere as he liked.

> Both presidents, at the least, are culpable of massive misjudgement

The last obvious occasion was in 2011, when Blatter's hand behind the scenes was influential in supporting the successful campaign of Prince Ali bin Hussein' to oust Chung Mong-joon as Asia's FIFA vice-president.

Of course, Blatter's belief that the Jordanian prince would respond with blind, grateful loyalty proved misguided; it was not long before Prince Ali emerged as one of the "awkward squad" within the ExCo, wanting real transparency, as opposed to Blatter's opaque version.

Much further back Blatter, as then general secretary, had played an influential role behind the scenes in seeing Alan Rothenberg unseat Werner Fricker as president of US Soccer in the run-up to the 1994 World Cup hosting in the United States.

For years, Blatter was also perfectly content to allow Mohamed bin Hammam and Jack Warner free rein within Asia and CONCACAF as long as they delivered whatever votes when he needed them.

Blatter, of course, also undertook the sleight of hand which saw Jerome Valcke apparently cast into outer darkness as an easy scapegoat for the costly MasterCard/Visa car crash – before bringing him back in the powerful role of secretary-general little more than six months later.

Valcke's silence since his suspension by FIFA – and then by the ethics committee over allegations of misconduct in office, notably the tickets scam claim – has been intriguing. While Blatter, Platini and their lawyers have screamed their outrage across the airwaves, Valcke has maintained a media silence beyond an initial denial of fault.

Remember that Valcke was suspended initially by Blatter in consultation with his emergency committee: the presidents of the six confederations.

One of those presidents, of course, was Platini. The suspension should have been ratified by the ExCo but it is thought that no formal vote was undertaken.

Valcke may think that any suspension of Blatter and Platini for misconduct will offer him an opportunity to challenge his original suspension as unsafe and invalid on the grounds that their judgment is at issue (to say the least).

It was Valcke who had cautioned, at the World Cup draw, that FIFA would not be able to sign any new sponsor deals until all the political chaos had been resolved.

This prompted speculation about cost-cutting, which would appear an over-reaction. Once a new president is in place, along with a few reform cosmetics, then would-be sponsors will have all the more reason to form a disorderly queue outside the electric doors at the Home of FIFA.

Action taken

German judge Hans-Joachim Eckert and his ethics colleagues banned Chung Mong-joon for six years over issues arising from the 2018-2022 World Cup bid campaign, and then suspended Nepal FA president Ganesh Thapa for 10 years and Laos leader Viphet Sihachakr for two on bribery and misconduct charges.

Franz Beckenbauer and long-serving Spanish federation president Angel Maria Villar were each fined and warned after initial non co-operation with the World Cup bid investigation. Not that Villar will worry too much. He remains a vice-president of FIFA and UEFA and, indeed, could emerge as an interim president of the European federation with Platini out of the picture.

Elsewhere in Switzerland, Brazil's ex-CBF president Jose Maria Marin followed Jeff Webb's example in accepting extradition to the USA over FIFAGate charges (which he denies). Marin preferred the house arrest luxury of his swish Fifth Avenue apartment in New York's Trump Tower to solitary confinement in a Swiss detention centre, in a country where he understood none of the languages.

This still left five members of the "Zurich Seven" contesting extradition while, out in the wider world, Nicolas Leoz in Paraguay and Jack Warner in Trinidad continued to drag out their own extradition cases. US Attorney-General Loretta Lynch and her team may face challenges to bring cases to court or cut more plea-bargain deals.

Time is not on her side though it seems that the evidential mountain has grown after the federation presidents of Chile (Sergio Jadue) and Colombia (Luis Bedoya) both abandoned their posts and flew to New York to talk to prosecutors.

Quit...Wolfgang Niersbach

Del Nero and Niersbach join club

Marco Polo Del Nero is not the only FIFA ExCo member in an odd limbo now that Wolfgang Niersbach has joined the club, albeit in differing circumstances.

Del Nero skipped Zurich before Congress in May for fear of being arrested. Back home in Brazil he is safe from extradition. Hence he has missed the last five FIFA ExCo meetings and does not fly abroad with the CBF delegation for Brazil's World Cup qualifying ties.

Indeed, he has even registered with the Brazilian courts his fear of arrest when he appears before Romario's parliamentary inquiry into the financial mysteries of the CBF.

Niersbach's situation is the exact opposite. He can continue in active membership of the FIFA and UEFA ExCos even though he has quit as president of the German DFB under pressure of controversy concerning the €6.7million loan to the German 2006 World Cup bid.

As Niersbach, bid and organising president Franz Beckenbauer and former DFB leader Theo Zwanziger each came up with differing, equally implausible, stories, so Niersbach – as the only man still in an executive position – was left with little option but to stand down.

He has indicated a will to carry on with his lucrative FIFA and UEFA duties, a stance for which he criticised Zwanziger when he quit the DFB presidency.

Germany's interim joint DFB presidents, Rainer Koch and Reinhard Rauball, have promised to get to the bottom of the payment mystery and have appointed lawyers Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer to come up with answers.

Since Beckenbauer is saying that he signed whatever was put in front of him without question, they may struggle for satisfactory answers.

On the election trail...

Diligent...Jerome Champagne

Muddle...David Nakhid

FIFA's presidency election campaign is under way, comparatively quietly so far. The electoral committee endorsed five candidates – barring Liberia's Musa Bility on the grounds of past tax and ethics issues and Trinidad's David Nakhid over a nominations muddle (which he is appealing at CAS).

South Africa's Tokyo Sexwale made an abysmal start with a lacklustre speech to a high-profile security conference in New York then a naive proposal for shirt sponsorship for national teams.

Prince Ali and Jerome Champagne have been diligent out on the campaign trail while Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa appears satisfied so far to have surmounted "nasty lies" about his role in Bahrain's crackdown on pre-democracy supporters in 2011.

> Uncertainty lingers over Platini's attempt to clear his name

The role of Gianni Infantino remains nebulous, while uncertainty lingers over Michel Platini's attempt to clear his name and return to the fray. If he fails and Infantino carries on then the UEFA general secretary may come under pressure to step aside from his Nyon duties to avoid conflict of interest concerns.

Prince Ali has been the bookies' early favourite on the grounds of his performance last May. Insiders lean – with no great enthusiasm, it must be said – for a Salman presidency with Infantino as secretary-general.

But in the present topsy-turvy state of affairs in and around FIFA, who knows which men will be left standing on February 26?

"She was, for me, a point of reference, someone who supported me, a big sister"

Marseille and France midfielder Lassana Diarra on his cousin, Asta Diakite, who was killed in the Paris terrorist attacks

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Appointments, sackings and loans

IN

Full time...Andre Schubert

EUROPE

Ex-Lyon coach **REMI GARDE** replaced Tim Sherwood in charge of Premier League side Aston Villa.

Former Barcelona B coach **EUSEBIO SACRISTAN** took charge of La Liga strugglers Real Sociedad after they sacked David Moyes.

ANDRE SCHUBERT, who was made caretaker in September, was named Borussia Monchengladbach's permanent coach.

Former Borussia Dortmund and Galatasaray boss **MICHAEL SKIBBE** was appointed coach of Greece.

Former Rennes coach **FREDERIC ANTONETTI** took charge of Lille, who dismissed Herve Renard after just 13 Ligue 1 games.

Former Turkey boss **MUSTAFA DENIZLI** – who is the only coach to have won league titles with Istanbul's "big three" – replaced Hamza Hamzaoglu in charge of Galatasaray.

Greek gig...Gus Poyet

Uruguayan **GUS POYET** was named boss of Greek side AEK Athens, while former Internazionale and Udinese coach **ANDREA STRAMACCIONI** replaced Giannis Anastasiou at Panathinaikos,

Former USA and Egypt coach **BOB BRADLEY** took charge of Ligue 2 side Le Havre after leaving Stabaek of Norway.

Bulgarian champions Ludogorets brought back former coach **GEORGI DERMENDZHIEV**, who left the club in May, when Eduard Eranosyan quit after just three months in charge.

CONCACAF

MIGUEL HERRERA, who was sacked by Mexico after July's Gold Cup, will take charge of club side Tijuana in January.

Former Arsenal and France midfielder **PATRICK VIEIRA** left his role as head coach of Manchester City's under-21 side and will replace Jason Kreis in charge of MLS club New York City on January 1.

VELJKO PAUNOVIC, who guided Serbia to the Under-20 World Cup title in June, was named coach of Chicago Fire, who finished last in MLS this year.

AFRICA

HASSAN SHEHATA, who led Egypt to three successive Africa Nations Cup titles, quit club side Al Mokawloon after failing to win any of the opening five league games of the season.

End...Morten Olsen has called it a day after 15 years

All over for Olsen

After 15 years as national coach, **MORTEN OLSEN** quit after Denmark's failure to qualify for the 2016 Euro finals in France.

OUT

EUROPE

Stuttgart parted company with coach **ALEXANDER ZORNIGER** after a 4-0 defeat at home to Augsburg in the Bundesliga.

Former Rennes, Lyon, Napoli and Sunderland full-back **ANTHONY REVEILLERE**, who made 20 appearances for France and was in the squad for the 2010 World Cup and Euro 2012, announced his retirement at the age of 36.

JOHAN CRUYFF quit his role as an advisor to Ajax, while **WIM JONK** left his post of head of youth development with the Dutch club.

AFRICA

Cameroon sacked 67-year-old German coach **VOLKER FINKE.**

Frenchman **CLAUDE LE ROY** quit as Congo coach after leading them into the third phase of the African World Cup qualifiers.

Back...Vicenzo Montella returns to the top flight

Coaching shake-up in Serie A

VINCENZO MONTELLA, who left Fiorentina at the end of last season, replaced Walter Zenga as coach of Sampdoria. **FABRIZIO CASTORI**, who was dismissed in September, returned to replace his successor Giuseppe Sannino in charge of Carpi. **DAVIDE BALLARDINI** was appointed Palermo boss for a second time, taking over from Giuseppe Iachini.

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Solid barrier...Jack Butland saves from Anthony Martial (right) during England's 2-0 win over France

England's cautious grounds for optimism

England's European prospects looked somewhat better after beating a French side which, as their goalkeeper Hugo Lloris said, "had a lack of aggressiveness and concentration. It was more about solidarity."

How, after the horrors of Paris, could it have been otherwise?

Still, after the tepid showing in Alicante, when England treated Spain with such excessive respect, it was unquestionably a good step forward, and there should ideally be more to come.

This, after all, was a team without Theo Walcott, Jack Wilshere, Daniel Sturridge and, yes, Jamie Vardy, that explosive 28-year-old late developer. Recklessly jettisoned by his local club Sheffield Wednesday, he languished for years in non-league football, doing exhausting manual work, before his prolific inspiration of a Fleetwood team that he hauled into the Football League led Leicester City to give him a chance.

How sad that while Vardy continued his remarkable scoring exploits for his club, injury should have put him out of both those England friendlies, especially since Roy Hodgson, after mildly rebuking him for saying he wants to play through the middle rather than on the left, where he'd been used so far, seemed ready to grant him his wish.

Gift horses should not be looked in the mouth but now we must wait until March to see if Vardy can emulate his club form, centrally, for England.

Leaving out Wayne Rooney in Spain was, as he proved against France, surely a mistake, though deploying him notionally on the left was always potentially wasteful. In the event he wandered, and it was emphatically from the right that he walloped his spectacular goal.

It surprised me that Jamie Redknapp should state Eric Dier had done so well in front of the defence that Wilshere's place there could be threatened. Comparisons are odious and in this case surely daft. As Wilshere so splendidly showed in Slovenia last season, when his two fine goals saved English faces, he is essentially a creative midfield player. He is essential to the team, if only he can at last conquer injury.

Dele Alli showed high promise against France, but I was especially pleased to see 22-year-old Jack Butland, at last given the main role at Stoke City, come in and make such a fine save in the second half.

Successful for a patched up British Olympic team, he should never have been kept in secondary obscurity and could well now challenge Joe Hart, hardly unbeatable this season, for an England place.

O'Neill masterminds Northern Irish miracle

If there is one British international manager who surely deserves extravagant praise it must be Northern Ireland's Michael O'Neill.

The only comparison I can make with his astonishing feats, in taking a team seemingly without prospects to the Euro finals by finishing top of their group, is with the long-forgotten achievements with Wales of Ted Robbins. He was an international team manager who would turn Third Division players into red-shirted heroes for an afternoon.

O'Neill admits he has no more than 40 players, seven of them essential to his team, although they had failed in the previous World Cup eliminators.

As he said: "There are no Premier League players sticking their hands up to play for Northern Ireland.

"We have tried to find players with eligibility and had the door slammed.

"So instead of replacing them, I got those seven players in and told them they had to drive it, the culture and attitude. I had to convince them to stay, to give them individual targets to keep them interested."

Such players include the towering striker Kyle Lafferty, whose goals have been crucial to the team's success yet who cannot win a regular place even at modest Norwich City.

O'Neill, once a city analyst in finance, had plainly motivated Lafferty and readily concedes: "At times I am not in a strong position and am more tolerant of things than I would be if I was a club manager. I can't afford to upset the players because it would fester and, frankly, I need them."

An average player who began with Coleraine, O'Neill went on to Newcastle United, Dundee United, Hibernian and Coventry City, winning 31 international caps and ending up at Ayr United.

Leaving his lucrative financial job, he worked his managerial way up from Brechin City through Dublin's Shamrock Rovers to become Northern Ireland manager in 2011.

"I was never close to any of my managers," he says, "but I have learned from that." Abundantly.

Resourceful...Mark Warburton watches Rangers in action

Warburton on the rise at Rangers

Succeeding in Scotland after being so surprisingly jettisoned by Brentford is another resourceful manager who made money in the City before qualifying as a coach and dared to give it all up to turn – impressively – to football.

Not that it came overnight for Mark Warburton. He started almost on the bottom coaching rung at Watford but slogged away, punishingly combining both jobs until he worked his way up to academy manager. From there he joined Brentford, first as sporting director, then as a remarkably successful manager.

Why last season the owner abruptly decided to be rid of him since their football philosophies didn't coincide – Matthew Benham has his own original ideas of how a club should be run – remains baffling. Brentford have already sacked one manager this season and for all their high morale aren't remotely near the promotion places.

Warburton, instead, became the first English manager of Rangers, still rebuilding after financial disgrace in the second tier of Scottish football, and which had just ditched 16 players. This, however, is how he likes it. Under his shrewd guidance Rangers have sailed to the top of the table and who would bet against him taking them much further?

"I like the chance to build something," he says. "So at least I'd know if it doesn't work, I could put my hand up and walk away." He won't have to.

Against all odds...Michael O'Neill and his captain Steven Davies have taken Northern Ireland to France 2016

Allardyce vindicated on Rafa's mess

Real Madrid 0, Barcelona 4. Among those who can feel vindicated by the result, albeit at second hand, is Sunderland manager Sam Allardyce.

A newspaper columnist had some weeks earlier taken him to task at inordinate and sardonic length for stating in his autobiography that when Liverpool had beaten Milan in that dramatic European Cup Final in Istanbul it had been despite Rafa Benitez, rather than because of him.

Real's all too recent collapse, clearly affected by Benitez's incautious pressing tactics, reminds one of the mess he made of it that night in Turkey.

At odds...Rafa Benitez and Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard

In the first half, he inexplicably deployed a team with no player to mark an inspired and dominant Kaka, the Brazilian attacking midfielder. The Liverpool defence in consequence was torn apart and Milan ended the first half 3-0 up.

By all accounts, there was tumult and uproar in the Liverpool dressing room, with Steven Gerrard, an imposing captain, making himself heard – and loudly. Benitez came to his senses, sent on the German international Dietmar Hamann to mark Kaka and all at once the pendulum swung.

With Gerrard inspirational and the scorer of Liverpool's first goal, the three-goal deficit was wiped out and, after extra time, Liverpool proceeded to win on penalties. Despite Benitez.

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eyewitness

Sid Lowe reports from Madrid

SPAIN

Destruction derby

Real Madrid are humiliated by Neymar, Suarez and Iniesta in *El Clasico*

Neymar's backheel was perfect and so was Andres Iniesta's finish. Dashing towards the edge of the Real Madrid penalty area, he smashed the ball into the top corner past Keylor Navas. He hadn't scored for 608 days, not since Barcelona won 4-3 at the Santiago Bernabeu late in the 2013-14 season, but now he had put his side 3-0 up in another *clasico*. Not long after, Luis Suarez clipped in a fourth, leaving Navas on his knees before lifting the ball calmly into the net.

The first *clasico* of the 2015-16 season would "go down in history", Luis Enrique said afterwards. They always do. But, to use the Barcelona coach's own words, this one will be particularly memorable. "It tastes like heavenly glory," he said. Even when they are not, *Clasico*s have a habit of feeling definitive, of defining an era. There's something about them that seems to go beyond the game itself, conditioning the season and the clubs' futures, the fallout lasting well beyond the final whistle. And this one will certainly linger.

If defeat is a disaster for the losing side, a destruction like this is a catastrophe.

Emilio Butragueno, Madrid's institutional director, admitted the visitors had been the better team in everything. Barcelona had dominated a game in which Madrid were absent – their midfield especially. The media talked of a "humiliation", a "drubbing". *AS* called Barcelona a "cyclone that had left Madrid in ruins". Its match report began: "It's only November but the bonfire has begun at Madrid already."

In the final minutes, Munir El Haddadi missed a great chance to make it 5-0. "An act of charity," one Madrid-supporting columnist called it.

Gerard Pique was standing a few feet away. A Barca *soci* and, he hopes, future president, he was whistled throughout by Madrid's fans and had desperately wanted the goal. That he was so disappointed at only winning 4-0 spoke volumes, revealing just how complete this demolition was, how easy it had come to feel towards the end. This was the first time Madrid had been beaten 4-0 at home in 25 years but still Barcelona had wanted more.

AS's resident mad *Madridista* Tomas Roncero sulked: "I looked at the Real badge on my shirt and thought: 'what have they done to you?'" The "they" did not refer to Barcelona but to Madrid themselves. Barca had been superb but the home side were dreadful.

That was expressed in the standing ovation for Iniesta when he was taken off: there was recognition and admiration in the way they applauded him from the field but, just like the applause for Ronaldinho after he had led a similar destruction a decade earlier, it also served as a punishment to their own players.

Rafa Benitez had opted for his most attacking team but it didn't feel much like his team at all and they did precious little attacking. Madrid played supposedly a 4-2-3-1 but looked much more like a 6-0-4. A gigantic gap appeared between the back four plus the two deep midfielders and the front four. Gareth Bale and Karim Benzema, in particular, did nothing, while Cristiano Ronaldo and James Rodriguez were not much better.

There was little pressure applied, even though the coach insisted afterwards that the plan had been to push Barcelona back, and no one in the front four worked back. Or, indeed, worked forward. "I don't know," Luka Modric said when asked to explain it. But then he did explain it and in stark,

Final flourish...Suarez makes it 4-0 with a dink over Keylor Navas

The rout begins...Luis Suarez is engulfed by team-mates after putting Barcelona ahead

clear terms, his analysis damning and disturbing. "We were not a team," he said. "And when we're not a team it is difficult. It's not the first time this has happened."

There was a disconnect throughout the game: emotionally, tactically, physically. That seemed to reflect a disconnect between some players and the club's hierarchy – and particularly between some players and Benitez. The dressing room is not a happy place and these are not happy players. Some minds are elsewhere. Collectively they are poor; individually, too.

As Real Madrid's players went off at half-time, their fans whistled them. There was a *panolada* as well: the classic Spanish protest in which the crowd waves white hankies. Few carry hankies these days, but the white paper that formed a mosaic before the game was used instead. When the players came back out for the second half, the crowd whistled again, and there was more at full-time, the "hankies" out.

Devastation...Gareth Bale (left) and team-mate Karim Benzema were anonymous

There were also chants for Madrid president Florentino Perez to resign, which could be heard even over the attempt to drown them out by playing the club's anthem at full blast. When they had called for his head during the match, down in the presidential box Perez had shrugged as if to say: "What am I supposed to do?"

In a *Marca* poll the next day, fans laid the blame on him. Perhaps because of the sense that maybe the team Benitez picked was not Benitez's team; perhaps because of the imbalance in the squad and the sacking of Carlo Ancelotti; perhaps, too, because this result fits the recent history of this rivalry.

Over the last decade, Barcelona have defeated their arch-rivals 3-0, 3-1 and 6-2 in the league at the Bernabeu – all games where the gulf between the sides was huge – as well as knocking them out of the Champions League semi-final with a 2-0 win there, as well as beating them 5-0 at Camp Nou.

Benitez continued an unhappy trend for Madrid bosses. Manuel Pellegrini, Jose Mourinho and Ancelotti all lost their first *clasico* too. And in the last decade, Barcelona have won five of 10 *clasico*s here, scoring 22 times. They have also

Beleaguered...Rafa Benitez

won twice as many trophies as their rivals.

Two days later, Perez came out publicly to back Benitez, insisting he had the club's full support and the right to choose the team he wished. At most clubs that would go without saying, but not here.

Perez denied the relationship between the coach and his players was a difficult one, claiming: "Cristiano has never, ever said anything like 'with this coach we won't win anything' [as had been reported]. No one has said anything against him."

And Perez insisted the club's decline dated back to last January and Benitez had not yet had time to remedy that, thus laying the blame at the door of Ancelotti. In a press conference revealing a curious combination of an acute victim complex and a threatening tone, he also accused the media of leading a "campaign" against him. "All this stuff in the media is just to destabilise us," he said. "It's every day. Some naive people believe it. I won't tolerate it."

If in Madrid the *clasico* provoked a crisis, in Barcelona it provoked debate, especially when followed three days later by a 6-1 win over Roma in the Champions League. Frank Rijkaard, Pep Guardiola and Tito Vilanova have all had their epoch-defining *clasico* wins and now Enrique had his. It was asked, could this be the best team Barcelona have had?

Another question: might Lionel Messi, Suarez and Neymar be the best attacking trio ever? After all, they have won it all, completing a treble that only one Spanish team (Guardiola's Barcelona) had achieved before. In 2015 the front three alone have scored more goals than the entire Real Madrid side, and the way they compliment each other is dazzling. It is no exaggeration to say that this year's World Player of the Year podium should probably be occupied entirely by Barcelona players.

The front three have become genuine friends, seemingly unstoppable and the image of the club. Yet, curiously, it is an argument strengthened in the absence of the man who may be the best player ever.

When Iniesta scored the third goal in the *clasico* he ran to celebrate with Messi, who was standing smiling on the touchline, warming up still in his tracksuit. Messi had finally returned eight weeks after suffering a torn knee ligament against Las Palmas in late September, but had not been fit enough to risk starting. Instead, he began on the bench. But if some thought he might be called on to lead a rescue mission, the opposite happened.

He was able to enjoy a destruction carried out without him, and then come on and play the last half an hour, pressure-free. In that time, he had more touches than any of Madrid's creative players had in 90 minutes. More than Ronaldo, Benzema, Bale or Rodriguez. He even helped create the fourth goal.

When Messi had suffered the injury, Barcelona were a point behind Madrid. The following week they were beaten 2-1 at Sevilla. The extent of Barcelona's ambition seemed to be to try to resist as long as they could without him.

If they could reach the *clasico* more or less in touch with Madrid, that would be considered a success. Better still, if they could reach Christmas more or less in touch then they could finally add Aleix Vidal and Arda Turan to the squad and set about closing the gap. For Madrid, it was an opportunity to open up an unassailable lead. It didn't happen that way.

Messi got injured on September 26, yet in 10 games without him, Barca won eight, drew an irrelevant Copa del Rey first-leg game with a team of kids and cast-offs, and lost one – also at Sevilla's Sanchez Pizjuan. Then they took Madrid apart.

Suarez and Neymar had taken responsibility from the start, even if the team performances were not always great, and slowly Barcelona had found their form. Iniesta, Sergi Roberto, Ivan Rakitic and Sergio Busquets had performed brilliantly, and at the Bernabeu they controlled the game, keeping the ball away from Madrid who soon gave up the chase.

Iniesta was sensational; this may have been the best display of his career. Enrique described him as "*patrimonio de la humanidad*", the phrase applied to world heritage, a wonder to be enjoyed by everyone, property of the planet.

"Iniesta is unique: he has magic and he

Work ethic... Suarez leaps to help his side defend a Bale header

Reward...Man of the match Andres Iniesta crashes home Barcelona's third goal

has eyes in the back of his neck," he said. When it came to the goals, inevitably it was Suarez and Neymar who led them, with another colossal performance.

Suarez got the first and Neymar the second. A wonderful move between them almost led to the third. When Iniesta did get it in the second half it broke a long run: Barca's previous 20 goals in the league had all been scored by Neymar or Suarez. Up until that point the Brazilian and the Uruguayan had scored 22 of the side's 25 goals in all competitions, 11 each, since Messi had been injured.

"I have enjoyed watching them," Messi said, but he enjoyed playing with them more. Three days later, he made his first start since September, against Roma. He scored twice. **WS**

Support...sub Lionel Messi (far right) joins his team-mates in applauding their fans at the final whistle

Howard Johnson reports from Paris

FRANCE

A nation united in grief for Paris

The horrifying terrorist attacks of November 13 leave the capital bloodied but unbowed

Tributes...flowers and candles are left for those who lost their lives

France's collective pain at the terrorist attacks on Paris has been felt particularly acutely in the country's footballing community. After the shock of the scenes at the Stade de France on November 13, where the first attacks took place and taxi driver Manuel Dias was the first of the evening's 130 victims, football was forced to face up to the full horror of events.

Dias lost his life when a suicide bomber blew himself up just as the 63-year-old was dropping passengers – who were running late to see the friendly between France and Germany – outside the stadium. But while further devastation was mercifully avoided at the country's national arena, the events that followed – and thoughts about what might have been – have touched football fans, players and administrators alike.

The outpouring of emotion was immense. The French national team, *Les Bleus*, is loved and revered by everybody who follows the game here. It is often held up as a symbol of the kind of integration and brotherhood the country as a whole aspires to. When France won the World Cup way back in 1998, the team was feted because of its racial mix. The possibilities for true, lasting harmony among races under the flag of one nation seemed almost tangible back then. Seventeen years later, though, the dream of total racial integration still seems a million miles away.

"I find it hard even to speak about it," said 1998 hero Zinedine Zidane, himself the very symbol of hope for tolerance and understanding given his Algerian roots, when asked about the lives lost. "Such horror. Such pain. Such sadness."

There was, of course, talk as to whether Gameday 14 of Ligue 1, scheduled for just a week after the tragic events, should be cancelled out of respect, out of fear, out of a feeling that somehow it just wasn't right. But once it became clear that the national team would take to the field against England at Wembley just four days after the attacks, there was no question that those domestic matches would go ahead.

"We were united as a group tonight," said Nice forward Hatem Ben Arfa after the 2-0 defeat to England, though the result barely mattered, of course. "We're happy to have been able to pay homage to all the victims."

France's national television channel, TF1, broadcast the match without the adverts that usually follow the national anthems as a mark of respect.

The scenes played out across the country the following weekend were something to behold, with supporters expressing their feelings in all sorts of

> "I find it hard even to speak about it. Such horror. Such pain. Such sadness"
> **Zinedine Zidane**

different ways.

It was perhaps at Nice for the club's home game against Lyon, where emotions were best expressed. On the one hand, supporters held thousands of candles aloft surrounded by banners expressing love and support for all the country's football fans. On the other, a passionate chant of "*Daesh, daesh, on t'encule*" ("ISIS, ISIS, fuck you") reverberated around the ground straight after a rousing rendition of national anthem *La Marseillaise*.

Even on Corsica, where separatists would find it impossible to sing the French national anthem, the hymn was still played before the local derby match between Bastia and GFC Ajaccio. Very few sang, yet the moment was treated with respect, with

Respect...Paris Saint-Germain before their game against Lorient

Together...Marseille supporters show support for what are normally their bitter foes from the capital

just the one solitary whistle of protest.

Capital club Paris Saint-Germain, meanwhile, immediately marked the events by wearing shirts bearing the slogan "*Je Suis Paris*" ("I am Paris") for their following three games, against Lorient and Troyes in the league, and against Malmo in the Champions League.

Of course, football life must return to normal, even if things will never be quite the same. And once the white heat of emotion and grief had begun to subside, thoughts inevitably turned to the future – and particularly to the fact that France is currently preparing to host Euro 2016.

The 82-year-old French goalscoring hero Just Fontaine, the man who still holds the record for the most goals scored in a World Cup finals with 13 in 1958, was at the Stade de France for the Germany game. And he was quick to voice his concerns about whether next year's tournament should even go ahead here.

"It will be more difficult for France to guarantee the security of the event now," he said. "Of course, I hope these are the last attacks, but I don't know what these jihadists are planning. They detest France. But if we can't host things at the Stade de France, it would be better to give the tournament to someone else."

While there seems little doubt that France will go ahead and stage the tournament, there are already concerns about whether the now-traditional fan zones in host cities will offer too easy a target to terrorists.

Mathieu Hanotin, a politician who represents the area of Paris where the Stade de France is situated, says it's too early to make a definitive decision.

"Who knows what the state of mind of the country's football fans will be when the tournament comes around in seven months' time?" he commented.

"Of course we'll have to have serious discussions about whether we will be able to guarantee supporters' safety.

"But the fact that 3,000 people gathered in this very area to say no to terrorism just days after the attacks says something about our feelings here in France – and our resilience." WS

Fear...fans gather on the pitch at the end of the friendly with Germany

Embrace...at the end of the game, players were unaware of the full extent of events

Message...fans observe a minute's silence at Nice and display a banner that reads "let the heat of our candles warm your hearts"

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Peterjon Cresswell reports from Budapest

HUNGARY

Hurt over for Hungary

Storck leads team to first finals for 30 years

Some brave and unexpected team selections by incoming coach Bernd Storck enabled Hungary to overcome Norway in two knife-edge play-off games for a place at Euro 2016.

"Thirty years of hurt," sang fans at Euro 96 in reference to England's three decades without a trophy since 1966. Before Norway, Hungary supporters had endured a similar 30 years without qualifying for a single major tournament.

This sorry statistic was brought to an end with narrow wins in Oslo and Budapest: 1-0 and 2-1 respectively. While Hungarians took to the streets in wild celebration, the players stayed on the pitch at Ferencvaros for half an hour after the final whistle. Following a tearful communal rendition of the national anthem with the crowd, the players gathered round a bemused Storck to lift him up and threw him into the air.

Such scenes would not have been possible without three key figures.

First, Storck kept faith with veteran goalkeeper Gabor Kiraly, who marked his 100th cap in Oslo with several match-winning saves. The game turned on an early reflex stop by the former Crystal Palace man in the trademark tracksuit trousers, whose clean sheet set up Hungary for the memorable return leg in Budapest.

Making his international debut in Oslo was Laszlo Kleinheisler. Storck's surprise package marked his big night with a turn and snapshot goal after 26 minutes, upon which he ran to the bench to thank the man who had put so much faith in him. The 21-year-old flame-haired midfielder had not played a club game all season when Storck handed him a shock call-up. Having refused a new contract at 2015 champions Videoton, Kleinheisler had been farmed out to the club's reserve side in the third division – but was not picked even then. Storck, however, had been watching Kleinheisler on his three appearances for Hungary's under-21 side in the run-up to the Norway games.

> Few are more familiar with Hungary's young players than Storck, who was coach of their squad at the Under-20 World Cup in June

Few are more familiar with Hungary's young players than Storck. Coach of their squad at the Under-20 World Cup in New Zealand in June, the German former boss of Kazakhstan led his charges to the knockout stage, losing out to eventual winners Serbia through an own goal in the dying seconds of extra-time. Fresh-faced Adam Nagy stood out in midfield and he too moved up to Storck's senior side as the third key element in the play-off triumph.

Storck had stepped into the national job in August after Berlin-based Pal Dardai chose Hertha over Hungary as a full-time job. The popular Dardai had reversed a disastrous start to the Euro 2016 campaign, replacing hapless Attila Pinter. Keeping faith with flank-playing captain Balazs Dzsudzsak and veteran midfielder Zoltan Gera, Dardai brought one crucial element to the team: belief.

Following September's draws with Romania and Northern Ireland, Storck sacked his Hungarian assistant coaches and brought in Andi Moller, a former team-mate at Borussia Dortmund.

With the play-off place confirmed, the pair prepared Hungary for the biggest game in a generation. Few in the current squad can remember Hungary's last finals, the 1986 World Cup in Mexico. Even keeper Kiraly, who at 40 will be the oldest player to take part in any Euro finals if picked next June, was only 10.

In Oslo, the sense of occasion was

Debut to remember...Laszlo Kleinheisler (right) scored the winner in Oslo

Victorious...Hungary coach Bernd Storck celebrates with his players after qualifying for Euro 2016

Oldie...keeper Gabor Kiraly is set to be the oldest player to take part in a Euro finals

offset shortly before kick-off by the news that Kiraly's former rival in the national squad, ex-Sunderland goalkeeper Marton Fulop, had died after a long battle with cancer. The men in black armbands, and Kiraly in particular, duly performed heroics, making vital saves, chasing loose balls and winning crucial tackles.

In their post-match interviews after the first leg, no player talked of celebration. To a man, they had been drilled by Storck and Moller to focus on the home game ahead. The return in Budapest also turned on a superb strike out of the blue from an unexpected source. Ignoring calls to play Daniel Bode, Storck fielded ex-Watford forward Tamas Priskin, who span round two Norwegian defenders to curl a shot into the net after 14 minutes. Leading 2-0 on aggregate and galvanised by the selfless industry of Kleinheisler and Nagy, Hungary held on. Late on, sub Bode knocked on a corner that led to a second goal on the night to seal the tie.

Placed in the more favourable third pot for the finals draw, Hungary could surprise a few in France – if honorary Hungarian Storck keeps surprising his new-found compatriots. WS

THE OTHER EURO PLAY-OFFS

SWEDEN 4 DENMARK 3
(Sweden 2 Denmark 1; Denmark 2 Sweden 2)

A spectacular double from Zlatan Ibrahimovic led Sweden to victory with a draw away to neighbours Denmark, in Copenhagen, in the decisive second leg of the all-Scandinavian play-off.

Leading 2-1 from the first leg, Sweden were inspired by the Paris Saint-Germain forward, who silenced the home crowd in the 19th minute when he swept home a corner.

Denmark failed to spark in front of goal despite enjoying more possession and Ibrahimovic curled in a wonderful free-kick in the 78th minute to put the aggregate score beyond doubt, though Yussuf Poulsen and Jannik Vestergaard did score late goals for the hosts.

In the first leg, Ibrahimovic was outshone by team-mate Emil Forsberg as Sweden took a 2-1 lead. The impressive RB Leipzig winger scored the opening goal, running onto Mikael Lustig's cut-back to fire across Kasper Schmeichel, and set up the second by winning a penalty converted by Ibrahimovic.

Danish substitute Nicolai Jorgensen grabbed a valuable away goal. But it was to be Zlatan's night in Copenhagen three days later.

UKRAINE 3 SLOVENIA 1
(Ukraine 2 Slovenia 0; Slovenia 1 Ukraine 1)

Ukraine triumphed in a tournament play-off for the first time in six attempts when they comfortably beat Slovenia, who had beaten them in a decider for the 2000 finals.

Andriy Yarmolenko and Yevhen Seleznyov scored in either half to give Ukraine victory in Lviv.

In a hard-fought return in Maribor, Slovenia captain Bostjan Cesar gave his side a boost with an early goal. But Ukraine withstood heavy Slovenian pressure to frustrate the home crowd. Slovenia defender Miso Brecko was sent off for a reckless challenge on Yevhen Konoplyanka late in the game, and Yarmolenko broke away in the seventh minute of injury time to seal victory.

REP IRELAND 3 BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA 1
(Bosnia 1 Ireland 1; Ireland 2 Bosnia 0)

Two goals from Stoke City forward Jon Walters helped Republic of Ireland qualify at the expense of Bosnia, who struggled to impose themselves on Martin O'Neill's energetic side.

Walters dispatched a controversial penalty in the 24th minute of the second leg in Dublin after Ervin Zukanovic was harshly punished for handball. His second was more clear cut, a 70th-minute volley which sparked wild celebrations.

Captain Edin Dzeko had given Bosnia a lifeline in the first leg in Zenica, firing a quick response in the 85th minute after Robbie Brady's effort had seemingly given the Irish a valuable away victory.

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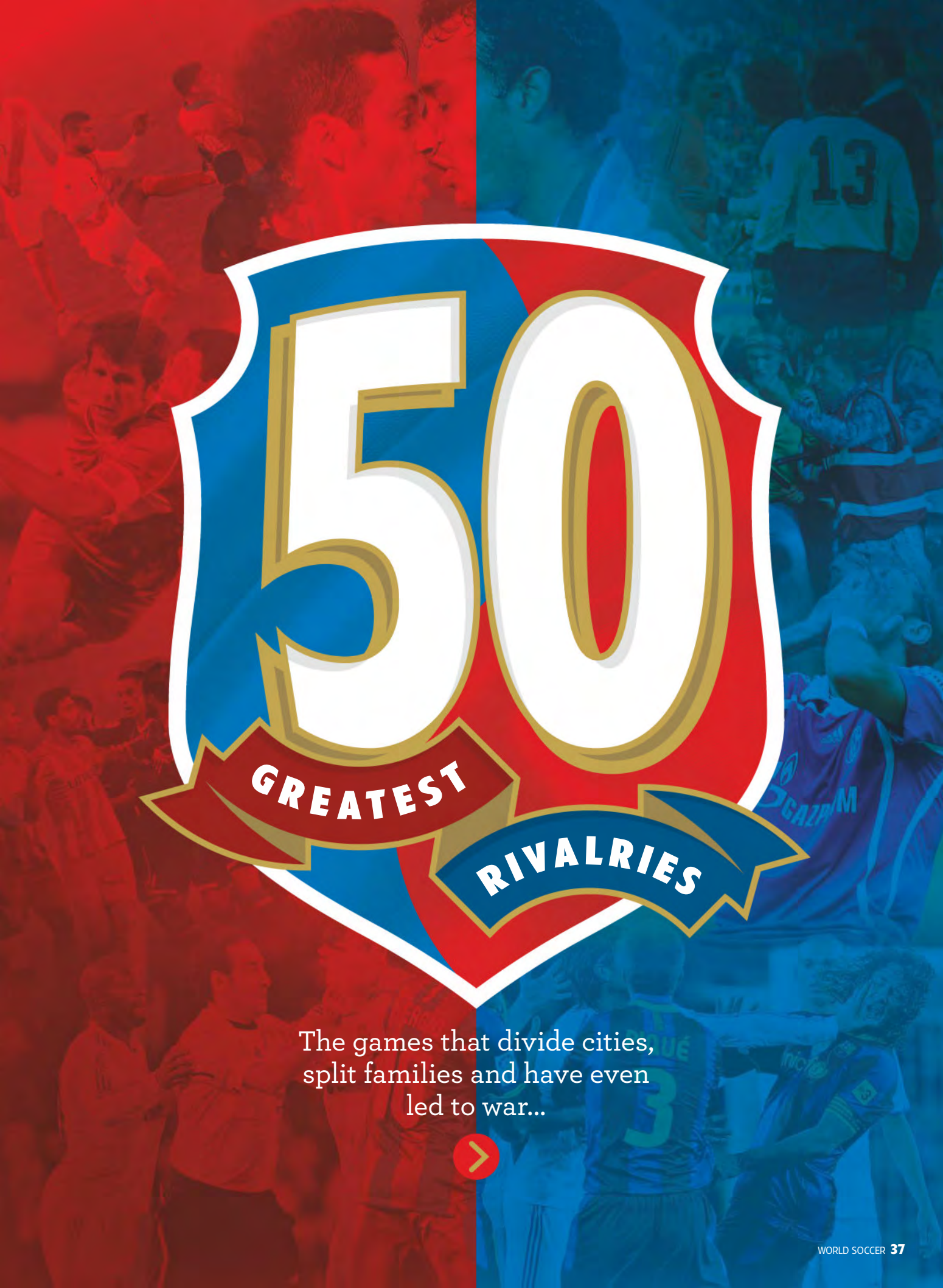

The games that divide cities, split families and have even led to war...

MILAN V INTERNAZIONALE

Dispute...Milan's Andrea Poli (left) and Jeison Murillo of Inter

The world's most celebrated shared-stadium, cross-city derby will soon be over. When Milan leave San Siro for their own new-build arena in nearby Portello as planned in 2020, they will close the door on seven decades of a rivalry based at the largest football arena in Italy.

Due to host next year's Champions League Final, the 80,000-capacity San Siro is a football temple bar none.

It was Milan, under the leadership of then-president Piero Pirelli, who built the San Siro in 1926. Designed specifically for football, it would also become the home of city rivals Internazionale in 1947.

With no running track and with four stands making a rectangular shape around the pitch, the San Siro has not lost its shape, style or staying power despite three major overhauls.

Tyre magnate Pirelli had taken over the *Rossoneri* of Milan in 1909 and, as opposed to the other stadia being built across Mussolini's Italy, he wanted his San Siro laid out like the traditional grounds in England, with the crowd up close. This may well have been a result of Pirelli's formative years in regular contact with the English founders of his Milan club in 1899.

The rivalry dates back to 1908 when Italian and Swiss members of the Milan club, unhappy with its British influence, broke away to form Inter.

The fixture between the two became known as the "*Derby della Madonnina*" in reference to the statue atop the landmark Duomo cathedral that dominates the city centre. Unlike Rome's Olimpico, with its running track, which city rivals Roma and Lazio share, San Siro is the perfect stage for the big occasion.

The rivalry dates back to 1908 when Italian and Swiss members of the Milan club, unhappy with its British influence, broke away to form Inter

◀ **Shared...San Siro is home to both clubs**

Supporters hang over the pitch in steep-sided tiers from where you can smell the turf near the touchline. And all across town, families, friends and colleagues part ways for match day.

Milan's cocktail-drinking image has since given way to a working-class one, with their blue-collar followers becoming known as "*cacciavite*" (screwdrivers).

Intense...Inter's Felipe Melo (right) and Keisuke Honda of Milan

Inter, meanwhile, began to attract high society once oil magnate president Angelo Moratti took over after the war, with his son Massimo witnessing the legendary 6-5 game of 1949 on his derby debut.

In 1955, San Siro was revamped, given another tier and its distinctive candy-twist appearance around the outside. Capacity touched six figures and 100,000 squeezed in to see Italy beat Brazil in 1956.

By the early 1960s, San Siro was in its pomp. With Moratti and mercurial coach Helenio Herrera at the helm, Inter matched Milan's 1963 European Cup win.

The next golden age came in the run-up to the 1990 World Cup. With Ruud Gullit and key Dutch stars winning European Cups for Milan, and soon-to-be world champion Lothar Matthaus leading title-winning Inter, the city was the centre of the football universe, confirmed by its hosting of the curtain-raiser for Italia 90.

For the tournament, a plexiglas roof with distinctive red girders was added to the stadium, as well as a third ring to take the all-seated capacity to over 80,000.

After these two periods of joint Milanese success at home and abroad, Inter's star faded and an incoming Massimo Moratti, son of Angelo, presided over a decade of humiliation while Silvio Berlusconi's Milan remained dominant.

When Inter's chance came to match Milan with a meeting in the Champions League semi-final of 2003, they lost on away goals. While tempers frayed amid *Interisti* in the Curva Nord, Milan's Curva Sud celebrated in style. Two years later, a clash at the same stage of the competition ended violently when Milan goalkeeper Dida was felled by a fan's firework with Milan leading 3-0 on aggregate.

Despite the downfall of Berlusconi and Moratti's sale to an Indonesian magnate, Milan against Inter at San Siro remains one of Europe's big occasions...until 2020 and almost certainly beyond.

Peterjon Cresswell

▲ **Fired up...Milan fans light up San Siro with flares during the "*Derby della Madonnina*" clash with Internazionale**

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CELTIC V RANGERS

Depending on your view, the Scottish League Cup semi-final meeting between the pair in January 2015 – the first since Rangers were demoted to the bottom tier in 2012 – was either the 400th game between the "Old Firm", or the first meeting of Celtic and the "new" Rangers. Which means it's either 159-145 to the Blue half of Glasgow, or 1-0 to the Greens.

RIVER PLATE

With South America's fiercest derby attracting global attention, the *Superclasico* rivals need each other more than ever

Even if the football on display has been in decline over the past decade, the intensity and passion of the *Superclasico* make it still the fiercest and most enduring rivalry in South America.

"Boca-River comes before everything," explains former Boca defender Roberto Mouzo who played in nearly 30 *Superclasicos*. "I still miss it."

And Leopoldo Luque, a 1978 World Cup-winner with Argentina who scored the winning goal for River against Boca on his debut for the club, says: "Anyone who says it's just another game is lying. It is not only the Argentinian *Superclasico*, it is also the South American *Superclasico*."

The *Superclasico* as an institution has transformed since the days of Mouzo and Luque in the 1970s and 1980s, but it remains a fixture that attracts attention and fans from across the region.

"Boca-River, or River-Boca, is something all supporters in the world have to see," claims Guillermo Tofoni, who organised the Argentinian national team's friendlies for many years and now handles the *Superclasico* friendlies, which are

▲ Derby passion...River defender Jonathan Maidana

▼ Intense...River and Boca fans at La Bombonera

BOCA JUNIORS

▲ Battle... River's Leonel Vangioni gets to grips with Marcelo Meli of Boca

staged during the summer around the country. "We are trying to move this derby around the world," he adds of a game that has already been staged in Mexico's Azteca. Organisers are now looking at Spain, London and China as potential venues to take the game in the future.

Yet as the *Superclasico* becomes increasingly and inevitably globalised, it is a rivalry that is firmly rooted in the port of Buenos Aires.

Today, Boca and River are located at opposite ends of the city, in very different neighbourhoods, feeding into the myth that the fixture pits the wealthy against the workers. But in 1915, a decade after both clubs were founded, their stadiums were just five blocks apart.

Both clubs were set up by the sons of immigrant families in the working class area of La Boca, and both opted for a splash of English in their name to add some perceived glamour.

With both clubs growing in size rapidly and offering a range of sports to their members, it was River who opted to leave the area. After a brief stay in the up-market neighbourhood of Recoleta, the club eventually settled in the north ▸

"Anyone who says it's just another game is lying"

Argentinian 1978 World Cup-winner Leopoldo Luque

▲ Back...Carlos Tevez returned to Boca in June

of the city where their Monumental stadium still stands. The move, in part, changed the social background of many of the club's supporters, but by then River were already nicknamed "*Los Millonarios*" due to their outlay on strikers such as Bernabe Ferreyra and Carlos Peucelle.

Boca remained in the area and are now an integral part of the identity of an area now called The Republic of La Boca. Their iconic Bombonera home is central to this identity, and the nickname "*Xeneize*", which is local slang for Genovese, has echoes of their immigrant background.

The architecture of the two club's grounds, along with the perceived social and class differences at the two clubs, also created different styles of play. At the Bombonera – which Boca cannot increase in capacity as neighbours behind the stadium will not sell up – the supporters are almost on top of the pitch, while the athletics track around the pitch at El Monumental gives players more breathing space.

"River is a team that goes out to attack," ex-Boca playmaker Juan Roman Riquelme told newspaper *Clarin* last year. "They don't go out to defend because their fans make them take the initiative." Roberto Passucci, a tough tackling midfielder from the 1980s Boca team, adds: "History shows that Boca traditionally score a goal and defend that lead with tooth and nail. River's history show they want to win played well. That is the difference between the two clubs."

Current River coach Marcelo Gallardo, who first joined the club at the age of 12, explains: "At River, you are told that you have to win, but do so playing well. Winning isn't enough, the idea is to treat the ball well." Gallardo played in several Superclasicos and was sent off in one particularly ill-tempered Libertadores Cup semi-final. "It is so passionate, so unbalanced," he recalls. "These games are so charged that it is difficult to remove yourself from it."

These days, however, the saturation of matches means that much of the hype ahead of many *Superclasicos* is rarely justified. This year alone the pair have met seven times: twice in pre-season in January, which Boca won; twice in the Libertadores Cup quarter-finals, which River won after an infamous pepper-spray attack by Boca supporters; twice in the league, with Boca winning both; and finally a sponsor-appeasing one-off towards the end of the year, which River won.

The Libertadores Cup clashes, on the back of a Sudamericana Cup tie last year, did bring back a level of expectation and intensity that had been missing as the two had not met on the continental stage in a decade.

While River have won more domestic league titles than this year's champions Boca – 36 to 31 – Boca have won the Libertadores six times compared to River, who won it for a third time this year.

These days, with income just a fraction of that earned by clubs in Brazil and Mexico, let alone Europe, it is true to say – better still, whisper it quietly – that River and Boca need each other far more than either may like to admit.

Despite their marketing value and their larger economies compared to other club sides in Argentina, both have to sell on promising talent quickly, meaning that teams are pulled apart and rebuilt every season.

And despite bringing through such recent talents as Gonzalo Higuain, Nicolas Gaitan, Erik Lamela, Ever Banega and Lucas Ocampos, the extent to which this impressive production line of talent translates into top-quality matches these days is somewhat debatable.

Joel Richards

> "River is a team that goes out to attack. They don't go out to defend because their fans make them take the initiative"
>
> Ex-Boca playmaker Juan Roman Riquelme

▲ **Experience...River Plate coach Marcelo Gallardo first joined the club aged 12**

▶ **Fanatical... River followers**

▲ Boca hero...Nicolas Lodeiro scores the only goal of the game in September 2015

◀ Heated...Boca's Juan Forlin shoves River's Leonardo Ponzio during the Libertadores Cup semi-final clash

KAIZER CHIEFS V ORLANDO PIRATES

One of African football's biggest rivalries is the product of Apartheid-era South Africa.

Kaizer Chiefs were born following a breakaway from Orlando Pirates in 1970 when players went on strike for a bigger share of revenue from exhibition matches. Suspended by the Soweto-based club, these players then set up their own team, under the guidance of star striker Kaizer Motaung, in order to play their own lucrative exhibition games.

The side became so popular they were quickly turned into a proper club, and when professional football was launched in South Africa's black townships in 1971, Chiefs and Pirates were founder members of the league.

The derby, of which Chiefs have won two-thirds, is the *clasico* of the South African season, but unfortunately the passion has often had tragic consequences. In 2001, a stampede to get into the game at Johannesburg's Ellis Park caused the death of almost 50 people, and there have been other fatalities over the years.

There is little love lost between opposing fans and there was not much more between the managements – until both realised how much muscle they commanded in the sponsorship arena when resources were combined.

Hence the clubs now share several sponsors and combine to invite major European clubs on pre-season tours.

JH

▲ Split...the Chiefs (yellow) take on the Pirates

BETIS V SEVILLA

▲ Euro tussle...Betis (stripes) and Sevilla

This Christmas will see the first staging of Spain's most ferocious local derby since the fateful spring of 2014.

Back then, Betis' 2-0 defeat by visitors Sevilla helped condemn the green-and-whites to the second tier. Equally painful was the penalty shoot-out a few weeks earlier in the Europa League. Betis won 2-0 at Sevilla's Sanchez Pizjuan in the first leg but Sevilla scored an early goal in the return. A late strike by Carlos Bacca sent the tie into extra-time, then penalties, where Sevilla kept their nerve and went on to win the trophy.

Now back in the top flight, Betis will be out for revenge.

The origins of the clubs are intertwined, with one formed by disgruntled members of the other. Employees from the Rio Tinto mines founded Sevilla FC in 1905, with their directors taken from the land-owning classes. When a director refused to hire a local factory worker there was a revolt and Betis were founded by dissident members.

▲ Unsavoury...Sevilla coach Juande Ramos was struck by an object thrown from the crowd in 2007

The first derby, in October 1915, saw Sevilla win 4-3. The return 2-2 draw on New Year's Day was set against a backdrop of disputes over land reform and a violent game set the tone for the next century.

Each has had a hand in the other being relegated and 2005 saw fights among fans and between the coaching staffs. In 2007 Sevilla coach Juande Ramos was knocked out by a missile and Betis were ordered to play three home games elsewhere.

PC

SEOUL V SUWON BLUEWINGS

Suwon Bluewings and Anyang Cheetahs were two sides based in satellite cities of Seoul, whose biggest clash was played 4,100 miles away – in the 2002 Asian Club Championship Final in Tehran, which Suwon won on penalties after a 0-0 draw.

The clubs' rivalry had always been there as Samsung and LG, owners of Bluewings and Cheetahs respectively, also competed in the electronics market. However, back in those days, there was a grudging affection between the two sides.

That was never more evident than in 2004, when LG moved Cheetahs to the capital and the vacant World Cup Stadium. Anyang and Suwon fans campaigned together against the move, but their efforts were in vain. FC Seoul was born and all the affection and respect disappeared.

▲ New addition...the Seoul World Cup stadium hosts the derby

Initially, Suwon refused to acknowledge upstarts Seoul, who claimed Cheetahs' past titles as their own. "Rivals?" went one banner. "Just a disgrace to the K-League." Many Suwon fans still refuse to utter the word "Seoul", branding them "FC immoral".

Crowd trouble on derby day is rare, but the clubs still express mutual dislike – not least in a tit-for-tat move in 2006 to list the opposing players on their electronic scoreboard in the tiniest writing possible.

When Seoul fans abused 2002 World Cup hero Ahn Jung-hwan at a reserve match he went to confront them and had to be dragged away. Big rivals then...and these days even Suwon fans admit it.

JD

AJAX V FEYENOORD

Ajax and Feyenoord may not come from the same city but theirs is by far the biggest clash in the Dutch game and *De Klassieker* is as fierce a fixture as anything in Glasgow, Rome or Buenos Aires.

Representing relaxed, rich Amsterdam and working-class Rotterdam respectively, Ajax and Feyenoord enjoyed a friendly rivalry when they both had European runs in the late 1960s. But hooliganism reigned in the 1970s – and by the 1980s there was something close to war twice a season.

For followers of Ajax, Feyenoord fans are the "*Kakkerlakken*" (cockroaches), while Ajax's Jewish heritage is always mocked in Rotterdam. Matters came to an ugly head in 1997 when, with match day closely policed, supporters arranged to meet in a field by the motorway at Beverwijk and fight each other – with one Ajax follower dying as a result.

These days, fans must travel by train and are shepherded through tunnels between station and stadium. Tensions are still high, and there was a near riot in 2005, but at least no one died.

As for the football, the 1983-84 season was the most notorious due to Johan Cruyff, the most famous Ajax player in history, controversially joining Feyenoord to spite the Ajax management who had not offered him a new contract. He helped Feyenoord win a memorable league-and-cup double – but only after Ajax had beaten them 8-2 in Amsterdam.

PC

▼ **Beaten...Ajax score against Feyenoord keeper Erwin Mulder in the grudge match**

GERMANY V ITALY

Resolute...Italy keep Germany at bay in the Euro 2012 semi-final

In Italian the phrase "*bestia nera*" means "nemesis" and the *Azzurri* are definitely Germany's. In eight major tournament match-ups, stretching over more than a half-century, the *Nationalmannschaft* have yet to win a single one, forced to bend the knee time and time again on the crucial occasion: World Cup semi-final losses in 1970 and 2006; a 3-1 defeat in the 1982 World Cup Final; and a last-four elimination at Euro 2012, in which a 2-1 reverse saw Germany coach Joachim Low get his strategy and selection sums all wrong.

Whenever the pressure mounts in do-or-die situations against Germany, the Italians always seem to have an extra gear or two to slip into. Superior tactical know-how and discipline, more ruthlessness, greater mental strength and character. In other words, more German than the Germans.

Brazil, Argentina, England and France might not strike fear into German hearts, but Italy certainly do.

Germany's Italian-induced complex has its roots in an unforgettable semi-final at the 1970 World Cup in Mexico, a pulsating, edge-of-the seat affair which Italy eventually won 4-3 in extra-time. With both teams on the verge of exhaustion during the additional 30 minutes, and the errors and the goals piling up, Italy ultimately proved the most durable and courageous. The tone had been set.

NB

HAJDUK SPLIT V DINAMO ZAGREB

If ever a league relied on a derby fixture, it was Croatia. Yet such has been the recent domination of Dinamo Zagreb, who won a 10th consecutive title in 2015, that their rivals in the *Vjecni Derbi* ("eternal derby"), Hajduk Split, have been forced to adopt strange tactics to counter them.

That season, Hajduk refused to take the field at Zagreb's Maksimir, where away fans had been banned, and the game was awarded to Dinamo.

Dinamo represent Croatia's capital, the seat of power and government, while Hajduk, from the second city of Split, are the flagship club of Dalmatia and almost everyone's favourite second team outside of Zagreb. One side views Dalmatians as lazy and inefficient, while people from the capital are considered snobbish: the classic generalisation of any north-south divide.

Politically, Hajduk have always been tied to Croatian nationalism and bear the chequerboard motif on their badge. Zagreb had nationalism forced on them when state president Franjo Tudjman insisted they be called Croatia Zagreb, a name their fans, the Bad Blue Boys, protested at and finally had reversed. Hajduk's *Torcida* fans have also been pro-active but not always for the best – unfurling banners insulting Dinamo's black players on derby day.

But with crowds and TV revenues so modest, and so much talent going abroad, derby day is pretty much the only game in town as far as the league is concerned.

PC

▲ **Noisy...Hajduk fans make their presence felt on derby day**

JUVENTUS V FIORENTINA

December 13 sees the latest instalment of Italian football's bitterest rivalry. And with Fiorentina enjoying their best season in years, while recent four-time champions Juventus made their worst start to a campaign for ages, the fixture may offer the *Viola* at least a modicum of revenge for decades of perceived injustice at the hands of the "Old Lady".

Conspiracy theories are still expounded about the last day of the 1981-82 season, when the pair were level on points at the top of the table. Fiorentina were at Cagliari, Juve at Catanzaro and both were 0-0 at half time. As the prospect of a play-off game approached, Fiorentina were denied a goal just as Juve were awarded a dubious penalty that saw them win the *scudetto*. Coincidence?

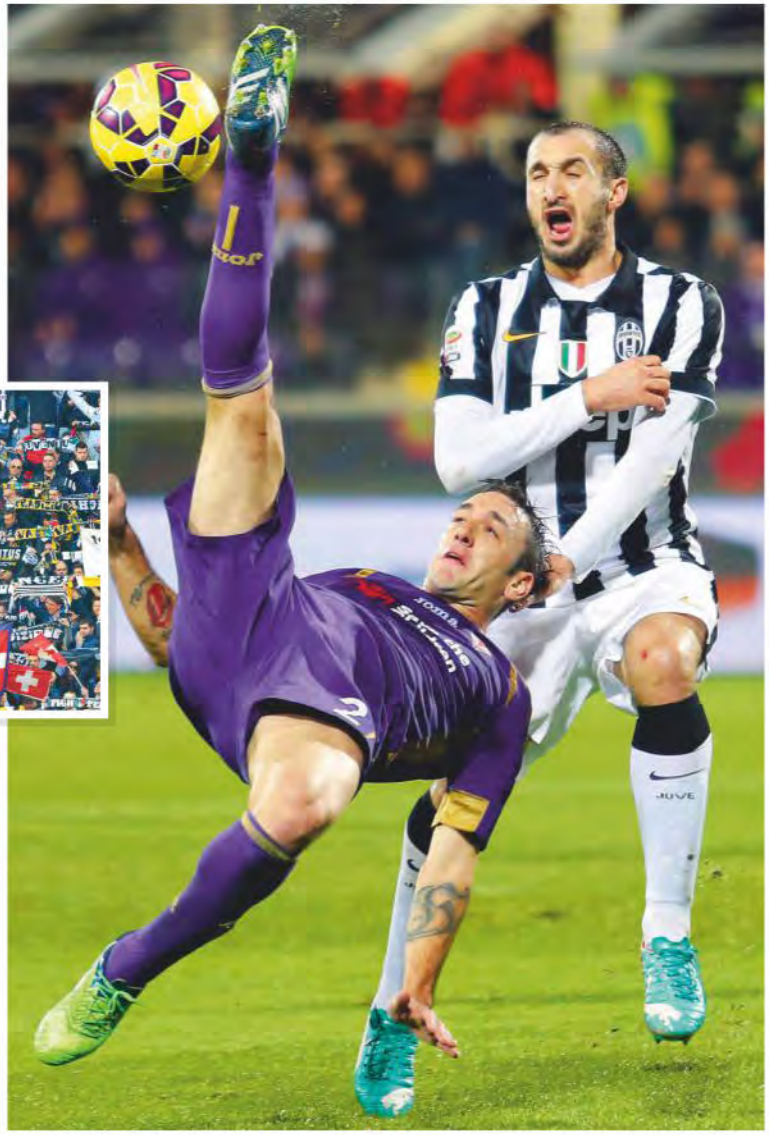
In the 1990 UEFA Cup Final, crowd trouble in Turin meant the second leg was moved to Avellino – one of many Italian towns with a strong "Zebras" following. Another win for Juve...

Weeks later, Juve signed Roberto Baggio from Fiorentina in a move that so angered fans that club president Lorenzo Righetti was sacked. The following season, Baggio strode out at a crazed Stadio Artemio Franchi in the black-and-white stripes of his new club. Amid all the hostility, Juve were awarded a spot-kick but Baggio, the usual penalty taker, refused to step up and a potential riot was averted.

And Juve's recent superiority has not been confined to the league. In 2014 and 2015, they won in Florence to progress in the Europa League and Italian Cup.

PC

▼ **Fan base...Juventus enjoy support across all of Italy**



▶ **Avoidance...Giorgio Chiellini of Juventus comes face-to-face with the boot of Fiorentina's Gonzalo Rodriguez**

CROATIA V SERBIA

▲ **Inflammatory...Serbia supporters burn a Croatian flag**

This is a rivalry that was played out at club level before it was an international clash.

In May 1990, (Serbian) Red Star travelled to Zagreb to meet (Croatian) Dinamo in what would be the last game before the collapse of the old Yugoslav league and with it the state itself. Hooligan gangs from both clubs clashed amid some of the worst violence ever seen at a football match in Europe.

The game was abandoned after 10 minutes – but not before Zagreb's captain, Zvonimir Boban, kicked a policeman who was trying to prevent Croatian hooligans from attacking the Red Star end.

When Yugoslavia finally broke apart, each new nation quickly established their own national football teams – and international football became a channel for old animosities.

When Croatia were drawn against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (effectively Serbia and Montenegro) in qualification for the 2000 European Championships, the two games were played in a frighteningly accurate approximation of war.

However, when Serbia travelled to Zagreb to play Croatia in a 2014 World Cup qualifier it was only hard-core nationalists that kept the flame of hatred alive by singing "Death to the Serbs".

JH

BENFICA V PORTO

Portugal's own *O Classico* has had a significant bearing on the destination of domestic silverware in recent seasons.

In 2013, a 92nd-minute goal by Kelvin gave Porto victory in the penultimate game of the season as they snatched the league title from Benfica at the death to make it three championships in a row. In 2014, Benfica beat Porto in the cup semi-final to allow them to complete a rare treble – despite a 2-1 defeat at Porto on the last day.

Of course, the rivalry between the two dates back as long as the pair have monopolised the Portuguese game.

Benfica, representing laid-back Lisbon, dominated through the 1960s and early 1970s, while industrious Porto came strong in the 1980s. And once serious TV money became available, subsequent coaches and chairmen set about trying to influence the local press and officialdom by fair means or foul – with scandal being the inevitable result.

▲ Away loss...Benfica (in red) lost 1-0 at Porto in the league this season

Porto fans claim that corruption allegations levelled at their former boss, Antonio Oliveira, were planted in the Lisbon press. In 1997, Benfica president Vale e Azevedo declared a media war, and long-established Porto chairman Pinto da Costa was found guilty by the police judiciary of bribing referees in 2003-04. The former boxing manager did not appeal the verdict, only his own two-year ban.

PC

AIK V DJURGARDEN

With Hammarby once again a top-flight outfit, Stockholm has seen several cross-city clashes in the league this summer. However, it is the *Tvillingderbyt* ("twin derby"), when AIK meet Djurgarden, that the most noise, colour and, invariably, aggression is created.

These days, the championship is rarely decided on derby day as it has been a decade since Djurgarden last won the title. And the dynamic has also changed since each club moved to a new-build stadium: AIK at the national Friends Arena and Djurgarden at the multi-purpose Tele2 Arena (which is also used by Hammarby).

Equally, the characteristics of each fanbase are no longer what they were in an era when the Rasunda and Olympic stadiums would be full to capacity.

Both clubs were founded within weeks of each other in 1891, with a derby history dating back to July 1899. Decisive battles came in 1916 and 1917, when each side claimed victory from the other in the one-off Final of the cup-structured Svenska Masterskapet, making them national champions.

Back then, traditionally working-class Djurgarden drew their support from Ostermalm and the eastern parts of the city, while AIK and their Black Army saw their middle-class support come from Solna and the north-western area of Stockholm. AIK's venerable heritage and royal connections also made them the most hated club in Gothenburg and the provinces.

In the modern era, these social and geographical lines have become blurred yet derby day is still a fiery affair, with a heavy police presence all over the city.

PC

▲ Fiery...the "twin derby" is the one that matters in Stockholm

RACING V INDEPENDIENTE

▲ Volatile...Racing (in red) and Independiente

Just 400metres separate Argentina's third and fourth most popular clubs in the working-class suburb of Avellaneda in greater Buenos Aires, just the other side of the River Riachuelo from the city.

Racing were Avellaneda's dominant force in the amateur era, winning the first derby of the professional era (1931) 7-4 and enjoying another period of dominance in the late 1940s and early 1950s. This was also the heyday of state president Juan Peron, after whom their stadium is named. Since then, however, they have easily been overtaken by Independiente, who are nicknamed "the Cup Kings" after a record seven Libertadores Cup wins.

▲ Unhappy...the two sides currently share Racing's stadium

Independiente are rebuilding their stadium with the proceeds of the sale of Sergio Aguero to Atletico Madrid and currently share Racing's ground – which is unlikely to have brought the fans closer together. Racing are in relegation danger, and Aguero has said, as an Independiente fan, he would love to see Racing go down.

The last meeting at Independiente's ground, in November 2006, was abandoned in a cloud of tear gas, as Racing fans battled with police and broke up the stadium in the process.

JH

MARSEILLE V PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN

The rivalry between the clubs representing Provence in the south and Paris in the north is one born of the modern era, with OM already having seven decades of cup-fighting tradition behind them when PSG were created in 1970 by a merger of several smaller clubs in the capital.

As PSG rose up the divisions, OM – under their free-spending president Bernard Tapie – challenged Bordeaux's domestic hegemony.

The pivotal year came in 1993, after Canal Plus had bought control of PSG with the intention of superseding Marseille, who were winning titles with regularity. Tapie's men had become the first French club to win the European Cup, although it turned out they had bribed opponents in domestic matches at the same time. But when OM were stripped of their league title, second-placed PSG were not handed the trophy as Canal Plus feared a negative reaction from subscribers in the south.

Marseille's return from an enforced stay in the second tier coincided with an increase in violence among PSG followers – who were mostly bored suburban kids with a grudge to bear.

These days, when *Le Classique* is played, the focus falls on hooliganism. Although there are usually several arrests, actual fatalities are rare, but in 2010 a young Paris Saint-Germain supporter was left in a coma and later died after an attack – by a gang of rival PSG fans.

Peterjon Cresswell

▲ **Clear...OM fans don't think much of PSG**

▲ **Unstoppable...Marseille keeper Steve Mandanda denies Zlatan Ibrahimovic of Paris Saint-Germain in October, but the Swede scored two penalties as PSG came from behind to win 3-2**

JAPAN V SOUTH KOREA

Continental clash...Japan's Shinji Okazaki (left) and Park Ji-sung of South Korea contest an Asian Cup semi-final in 2011

▼ Inflammatory... historical Korean figures

Some rivalries stem from history, some from geography and some from football. And some, like this, have all of them.

In March 1954, the two countries were due to play a two-legged play off, in Tokyo and Seoul, to decide who would represent Asia at that summer's World Cup finals. However, South Korean president Syngman Rhee – who had been tortured by the Japanese during their brutal occupation of Korea from 1910 to 1945 – refused to let Japan visit, so both legs were played in Tokyo. He also told his players to throw themselves into the East Sea/Sea of Japan (the name is an issue of contention) if they lost. They won.

Today's rivalry is heightened by the fact that they are the two best sides in Asia – and there are still fireworks.

The last meeting on non-neutral ground, in 2014 in Seoul, saw away fans upset their hosts by sneaking in rising-sun flags, which is considered a controversial symbol in some parts of the continent. However, the visitors were met by massive banners made by home supporters depicting historical Korean figures that had assassinated Japanese officials.

Despite all the issues, the two sides meet fairly regularly in friendlies as officials enjoy the guaranteed sell-outs and television rights, while coaches appreciate the closest thing possible to a competitive fixture, especially when it is just an hour's flight away.

John Duerden

ATHLETIC BILBAO V REAL SOCIEDAD

The double-edged *Euskal Derbia* (Basque derby) is a display of regional solidarity against Madrid and a demonstration of the relatively low-key animosity between the flagship clubs from the neighbouring provinces of Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia.

Athletic, with their name Anglicised for most of their history, represent traditionally working-class Bilbao, while Real (meaning "royal") come from the fashionable resort of San Sebastian along the coast.

Both clubs were founded at the turn of the last century, and each was forced to undergo a name change by Franco's dictatorship. Both also had a policy of fielding only Basque players, which helped to bring local youngsters through the ranks.

Basque football's heyday came in the immediate aftermath of Franco's death. Within two weeks, the captains of each jointly displayed the illegal Basque flag to a cheering derby crowd. Within seven years, Sociedad had twice won the league, and Athletic won the next two.

As the traditional giants of Barcelona and Real Madrid brought in top foreign stars to redress the balance, Sociedad's management compromised on their Basque-only principles to sign Liverpool striker John Aldridge in 1989, and more would follow.

No longer could the Basque clubs present a united front.

PC

▲ Local hero...Bilbao's Gaizka Toquero celebrates his derby winner in 2011

AL FAISALY V AL WEHDAT

Flashpoint: police clash with Wehdat supporters

▲ **Hurdle...Al Faisaly (in blue) v Al Wehdat is a difficult game for both sides**

Derbies that make headlines around the world are usually dripping in intrigue, politics, farce and violence amid the 90 minutes of actual football. But the fiercest derby in Jordan has been elevated far beyond even that: it has made it to diplomatic level.

In 2009, a diplomatic cable titled "Jordanian Soccer Game Halted Amidst Anti-Regime Chants, Hooliganism, Towards Palestinians" was purportedly sent by the US embassy in the capital, Amman, and later released by the Wikileaks website. In it, the depths of Jordan's *Al Classico* were laid bare.

"Anti-Palestinian hooliganism and slogans denigrating the Palestinian origins of both the Queen and the Crown Prince led to the cancellation of a July 17 soccer game between the rival Faisali and Wahdat clubs [sic], who traditionally represent the East Banker and Palestinian communities, respectively," read the cable. "Matches between the two teams have a long history of violence," it went on. "The game exposed the growing rift between East Bankers and Palestinians in Jordan.

"The King's silence on the event is noteworthy, as is a reluctance among our contacts to discuss the issue."

The Faisaly-Wehdat derby doesn't have the size of the Cairo derby or the colour and pageantry of the Tehran derby. But, in terms of political significance, it is intertwined with the political currents of the region over the past 60 years, and few can beat it.

The two teams are part of a duopoly every bit as total as those in Spain or Scotland, and over the past 31 seasons Al Faisaly and Al Wehdat have won all but two league titles. But it is the symbolism of what both teams represent to their respective communities that gives the game its huge political significance in Jordan and beyond.

Wehdat have their roots in the Amman New Camp in the southern suburbs of the capital. The refugee camp was set up after tens of thousands of Palestinians fled their lands after the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, a date which is celebrated there but called *Al Naqba* (the catastrophe) by the Palestinians.

The club's kit is the colour of the Palestinian flag and its badge features a torch in front of the Golden Dome of the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Fans and players alike sing: "*Allah, Wehdat, Al Quds Arabyia*" (God, Wehdat, Jerusalem for the Arabs). Yasser Arafat, the former leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) once based his organisation in Jordan and called Wehdat the national football team of the Palestinians, long before Palestine was granted that right by FIFA in 1998.

After successive waves of immigration following wars between the Arab world and Israel, Palestinians now make up anywhere between 50 to 80 per cent of Jordan's population. "For Wehdat, 99 per cent of the fans are Palestinian," says Tareq Khoury, the wealthy Christian Palestinian businessman who is president of the club, as well as a prominent Jordanian parliamentarian. "You won't find any Jordanian fans of Wehdat."

Al Faisaly, on the other hand, are seen as the team of the true Jordanians, the "East Bankers" – referring to the fact that they come from the East Bank of the River Jordan, as opposed to the Palestinians from the West Bank. And the team traditionally dominated the league, just as the East Bankers traditionally dominated positions in the government, the army and the police.

In 1970 the tension between the two clubs almost led to civil war when King Hussein, father of Jordan's current ruler King Abdullah, led a military campaign against the PLO, who had created a state within a state. Thousands died during what is now known as "Black September" and overt Palestinian nationalism was banned.

These days the tension between Faisaly and Wehdat is rarely mentioned in public, except when they play each other.

"In the heat of the game, where large crowds gather, repressed feelings may be vented in the public sphere," explains Professor Yasir Suleiman of Cambridge University, who is an expert on the undercurrents in Jordanian society. "The authorities know this but, as long as the events are not overloaded, they tend to tolerate the political in football."

Suleiman was referring to chants such as that sung by Faisaly's fans, who cry: "One, Two, Three, Divorce Her You Father of Hussein", directed to the King of Jordan – and brother of the current FIFA presidential hopeful Prince Ali of Jordan – who married Queen Alia, a Palestinian American.

Over the years, the matches have been dominated by violence. In 2008 the police beat unarmed Wehdat fans after they had won the league title and were playing Faisaly in the last game of the season. In 2010, 50 Wehdat fans were injured after a stadium crush when Faisaly fans pelted them with rocks. When the fans tried to escape, they were then beaten back by the police, according to a report by Al Jazeera.

In recent seasons there has been an attempt to take the sting out of the rivalry. Jordan's national team, made up mostly of players from Faisaly and Wehdat, has enjoyed unprecedented success in recent years, even reaching the final play-off round for the 2014 World Cup finals, which it eventually lost to Uruguay.

"They are rivals on the pitch," said Prince Ali in 2013, when asked about how the tension between the two teams affects the national team. "I think the rivalry has helped us because there's so much emotion behind it."

But even with the success of the national team, the league rivalry remains fierce. Earlier this year a campaign was launched to change the colour of the uniforms worn by Amman's street cleaners as their bright orange jumpsuits were considered too similar to the uniforms the so-called Islamic State, or Daesh, use for their prisoners shortly before executions.

An online poll was held to decide which colour to use instead, and turquoise was chosen. There was just one problem.

"The new uniforms' colour...was claimed to be too close to the strip of Faisaly," reported the *Daily Telegraph*. As with all the fiercest derbies in world football, the rivalry sometimes emerges in the most unexpected of places.

James Montague

▼ **Silverware...Al Wehdat celebrate winning the 2011 Jordan Super Cup**

SERGIO
16
LFP
FCB

REAL MADRID V BARCELONA

As Sergio Ramos demonstrates with a hand to the face of Carles Puyol, there is little love between Spanish heavyweights Real Madrid and Barcelona. *El Clasico* is one of the world's most-watched sporting fixtures and represents a clash between two of the game's richest and most successful club sides.

ROMA

▲ Crisis point...Roma captain Francesco Totti (no10) and players from both sides urge referee Roberto Rosetti to call off the 2004 derby after fans throw flares onto the pitch

LAZIO

The *Derby della Capitale* has its roots in Italy's dark past of Fascism, racism and anti-Semitism

The Olympic Stadium, Rome, on the evening of March 21, 2004, minutes into the second half of a Lazio-Roma derby. Smoke flares have just been thrown onto the pitch, within seconds filling the stadium with such a dense smoke that it is temporarily impossible to play on.

In theory, fans from both clubs were protesting about the death of a child, allegedly run over by a police vehicle during pre-match skirmishes between fans and police. In reality, there had been no such fatality, but the rumour of the "death" spread like wildfire.

Not even seven announcements over the public-address system, pointing out that no one had died, could convince the sceptical fans.

At this point, amid huge confusion, at least three Roma ultras climbed the stadium barrier and made their way onto the edge of the pitch to talk to Roma captain Francesco Totti. One of them put his arm around the player's shoulders in a manner that seemed both patronising and menacing. And when Totti returned to the halfway line he could be heard telling his coach, Fabio Capello: "If we play on now, they'll kill us."

The two captains, Totti and Lazio's Sinisa Mihajlovic, then met with the referee, the experienced Roberto Rosetti, who appeared to urge both sides to play on.

It was clear that several players and club officials were unwilling to resume the game, notwithstanding the presence on the pitch of Rome's senior police officer, Achille Serra, who, in the interests of public safety, wanted the game restarted.

Rosetti was then handed a mobile phone and on the line was Lega Calcio president Adriano Galliani, and after a brief conversation, Rosetti abandoned the match.

If elements within the two clubs' supporters had appeared to make a common cause of their call for the game to be stopped, they immediately returned to a more familiar hostile mode in its wake. By the end of the night, 36 fans had been arrested, with 60 police and 15 supporters injured in a series of running battles.

That infamous derby says much about the Roma-Lazio rivalry. Firstly, that this is arguably the fiercest derby in Italy, with minority elements on both sides always ready and willing to fight with one another – and, above all, with the police. And secondly, those same minority elements on either side of the Roman divide tend to share the same neo-Fascist, racist, anti-Semitic views, meaning that they can, on rare occasions, join forces. This happened not just on the night of the 2004 derby but also again in November 2012, when Roma and Lazio fans reportedly came together to attack Tottenham Hotspur followers in a pub at Rome's Campo de Fiori on the eve of a Europa League tie between Lazio and Spurs.

> "If we play on now they'll kill us"
>
> **Roma captain Francesco Totti warns his coach, Fabio Capello, after anti-police protests by both sets of supporters disrupt the 2004 derby**

▲ **Provocative...Lazio's Paolo Di Canio's apparent Fascist salute towards fans after the 2005 clash at the Stadio Olimpico**

Outsiders often think that the Rome derby features a clash between political opposites, between a club with a clear Mussolini/Fascist inspiration – often identified as Lazio, thanks recently to Paolo Di Canio – and one motivated by a liberal democratic tradition. The reality, of course, is that both these clubs grew up in a Mussolini/Fascist cradle.

Roma were founded in 1927 at the behest of Mussolini himself, bringing together the major clubs of the capital – namely Fortitudo, l'Alba and Romano. Il Duce wanted a powerful club to represent the mythical name of "Roma". But there was one existing club in the

capital who resisted the call, refusing to amalgamate with the new club – and that was Lazio.

Founded 27 years earlier, Lazio were at that time controlled by Giorgio Vaccaro, an ambitious young Fascist militant and First World War veteran who had boldly introduced himself to Il Duce at a Fascist Congress in Rome in November 1921. Vaccaro had declared a major interest in sport so Mussolini, convinced that his totalitarian regime would have to stake out a moral dominion over every sphere of the individual citizen's life, including sport and recreation, had plans for him.

Vaccaro went on to become president of both the Football Federation and the Olympic Committee for a decade of the Mussolini dictatorship, playing a major role in running the Italy team that won the 1934 and 1938 World Cups. Back in 1927, he had Il Duce's ear to such an extent that he was able to ensure Lazio were not swallowed up into the new "Associazione Sportiva Roma" club.

Despite political affinities, from that moment on a bitter rivalry was born. Reports indicate that the very first Lazio-Roma derby, played at the Rondinella Stadium in Rome's fashionable Parioli on December 8, 1929, was marked by tensions. Even though this was a Lazio home game, there were far more Roma fans among the 15,000 crowd and they saw their team win 1-0.

Roma had more supporters for two reasons. Firstly, they could call on three sets of fans from their founding clubs, which meant that objectively they had three or four times as many followers. Secondly, Lazio, who were based in Parioli, had a far more middle-class following. Many of their fans reportedly stayed away from that first derby encounter as they were worried about the bellicose nature of the working-class Roma ruffians.

There was also tension about Lazio's refusal to join up in the new club. The *Laziali* were considered snobs and out of touch with real "Roman" sentiments. At that first derby, the Roma fans made a lot of play out of their superior "*romanita*" as expressed by the new club's name, its yellow and red colours, and its "Roman She-Wolf" symbol, featuring the wolf who, as legend would have it, suckled Romulus and Remus, the founders of ancient Rome. Given that there had already been scuffles at previous Roman games involving Alba, Fortitudo and Roman, there were even calls for that first derby not to be played at all.

> "I am not relaxed ahead of the derby as some people intend to take things in a direction that is not positive"
>
> Rome Prefect Franco Gabrielli

More than 160 games later, the Rome derby still continues to worry authorities. Such is its ongoing, potentially violent nature that the police have effectively banned a night-time version in modern times, insisting on a daylight kick-off for security reasons.

One aspect of the confrontation, however, has changed. These days, no one would accuse the *Laziali* of being Parioli snobs.

These days, both clubs draw their support from an across the board constituency that ranges from middle class to working class, from suburb to suburb, and from Rome city to the surrounding region of Lazio. If there is any significant difference in the two sets of fans, it might be that Roma tend to have a majority following in the city itself, while Lazio probably have more fans in the surrounding region from which they take their name. Both teams use different but powerful symbols of ancient Rome: the She-Wolf for Roma and the Eagle, mascot of the ancient Roman Legions, for Lazio.

To catalogue all the various "incidents" that have marked the history of the derby would require an account of Old Testament length, but over the years the game has seen a clash between some of the great names of Italian football: Fulvio Bernardini (Roma) and Silvio Piola (Lazio) in the 1930s, coaches Zdenek Zeman (Roma) and Sven Goran Eriksson (Lazio) in the

▶ Snap...Totti takes a "selfie" after scoring in his 40th derby

▼ No quarter...Edin Dzeko is sandwiched between Lazio's Lucas Biglia (left) and Mauricio

1990s, and great iconic players such as Totti (Roma) and Di Canio (Lazio) in the 21st century.

While Di Canio managed to score derby goals in 1989 and 2005 at either end of his much-travelled career, Totti has the highest number of derby appearances (36) and goals (11) in the game's history. When the then 38-year-old scored twice to see Roma pull off a 2-2 draw with Lazio in January this year, even he immortalised the moment by taking a "selfie" of himself celebrating in front of the Curva Sud, the Roma kop.

Negative derby moments include the Lazio curva greeting the *Romanisti* with a banner reading, "Auschwitz Is Your Country, The Ovens Are Your Homes" in 1998. Then there was the death of 33-year-old Lazio fan Vincenzo Paparelli, who was hit in the eye by a rocket flare fired across the Stadio Olimpico pitch by an 18-year-old Roma fan, Giorgio Fiorillo, before an October 1979 derby.

The terrified Fiorillo subsequently went on the run for 14 months but was finally arrested and sentenced to six-and-a-half months in prison. During his time on the run, he had phoned Angelo Paparelli, the brother of Vincenzo, practically every day to beg forgiveness, swearing that he had not intended to hurt anyone.

While the Rome derby is often recalled for a variety of usually negative reasons, it is rarely recalled for the quality of its football. It matters too much, and the fan pressure on players is so strong that 99 times out of a 100 the derby is, technically speaking, very poor. However, it is never boring and nearly always terrifyingly electric.

> "A thousand ideas were running through my head but this one stood out"
>
> **Totti on the selfie that celebrated his goal in his 40th derby**

It is often said that the fans of the capital city lay too much emphasis on the derby. Critics used to suggest that winning the derby meant more to Roman fans than winning the league title.

Given that Roma have won the *scudetto* just three times, and Lazio only twice, the fans could be forgiven for taking much solace from a derby win.

Paddy Agnew

FLAMENGO v VASCO DA GAMA

The Rio de Janeiro derby that is best known internationally is Flamengo versus Fluminense, but that rivalry tends to overstate the importance of Fluminense, a club of the elite whose high media profile has never been matched by their silverware collection (though they did win the national championship in 2010 and 2012).

Flamengo undoubtedly can call upon the most supporters in the city – and it is Vasco da Gama who come second. As they are Rio's two best supported clubs, their clash is known as "the derby of the multitudes". Not surprisingly, it is also the derby that most worries the authorities since it is an occasion when the city's violent tensions can boil over.

Vasco's roots lie in the city's Portuguese immigrant heritage. Founded in 1923, they blazed a trail in the Rio state championship by becoming the first team to field black players alongside their poor white counterparts. They initially faced discrimination from the city's elite clubs, including Flamengo, but consolidated their status as a Rio institution with the building of their Estadio Sao Januario in 1927.

The rivalry with Flamengo was forged in the 1930s when, following the introduction of professionalism, Flamengo stole Vasco's thunder by hiring the leading black players of the day. This enabled the club to build a huge nationwide following which continues to this day – much to the annoyance of Vasco.

JH

▲ Tumbling...Emerson Sheik of Flamengo takes on the Vasco defence

SWEDEN v DENMARK

▲ Assault...a fan tries to attack the ref

The Scandinavian neighbours are involved in one of international football's oldest rivalries, having first played each other in 1913. Until recently they had rarely met in competitive fixtures, but after their win in the recent Euro 2016 play-off, Sweden extended their lead to 46 wins, as opposed Denmark's 40, with 19 draws.

There has been plenty of controversy in recent times. Drawn in the same group at Euro 2004, a 2-2 draw in the final game ensured qualification for both at the expense of Italy. Cries of a "fix" prompted coaches and players to talk up their rivalry, with Denmark goalkeeper Thomas Sorensen making comparisons with those of Germany versus Holland and Brazil versus Argentina.

▲ Flashpoint...referee Herbert Fandel sends off Christian Poulsen

The greatest controversy centred on a Euro 2008 qualifier in June 2007 in Copenhagen. The Danes had recovered from 3-0 down to draw 3-3 when Sweden were awarded a controversial penalty in the 89th minute. Danish midfielder Christian Poulsen was sent off and a fan, Ronni Norvig, ran onto the pitch and tried to attack the referee, Herbert Fandel. The match was abandoned and Sweden were awarded a 3-0 victory which helped them qualify automatically from second place in the group, with Denmark back in fourth.

JH

ARGENTINA v BRAZIL

Argentina v Uruguay (see page 78) is a different animal, but South America's two most successful nations have a natural rivalry based purely on football, with no military, colonial or historical context.

It has intensified since the 1990 World Cup when the countries met in the second round and Argentina won with a late goal from Claudio Caniggia.

Brazil alleged that pitchside water bottles had been spiked by Argentina. Midfielder Branco drank from a bottle placed on the sideline by the Argentinian coaching staff and Diego Maradona later admitted it had been laced with tranquilisers, although coach Carlos Bilardo denied it.

The head-to-head record is tight. Brazil have 39 victories, Argentina 37, with 26 draws. Both teams have scored 159 goals.

JH

▲ Tempers flare...Argentina's Nicolas Otamendi takes exception to Luiz Gustavo of Brazil

CHILE V PERU

A rivalry that is little known outside South America is one of the continent's fiercest, fuelled by politics, border disputes and a 19th century war.

The *Clasico del Pacifico* has its roots in the animosity between the two Andean neighbours dating from the War of the Pacific in the 1880s. Chile fought against the combined forces of Peru and Bolivia, and their victory led to the annexation of Peruvian land which they have held – controversially – ever since.

Peru secured their qualification for the 1978 World Cup with a 2-0 win over Chile in Lima, but the Chileans have had the upper hand since then. They won 4-0 in Santiago in 1997 en route to qualification for the 1998 World Cup and were again the victors this summer, winning the Copa America semi-final 2-1.

JH

▼ **Painful...Peru's Carlos Zambrano was sent off for this kick on Charles Aranguiz of Chile**

LIVERPOOL V MAN UTD

Committed...Liverpool's Alberto Moreno challenges Anthony Martial

Liverpool may have a city derby which divides families, and the Manchester derby between United and City might take precedence for two weekends every season. But Liverpool v Manchester United is a rivalry based on the most important thing of all: silverware.

It pits United, the first English winners of the European Cup, against Liverpool, the English team who have won the trophy five times. One of the first things Alex Ferguson said after United had claimed a third European title in Moscow in 2008 was that he wanted "to add more [European Cups] and get up there alongside the Liverpools, Bayern Munichs and Ajaxs".

It was an acknowledgement that Liverpool still have the lead over United in European terms.

Domestically, though, United have now eclipsed Liverpool, having won their 20th top-flight title in 2013. Liverpool, not having won since 1989, have been stuck on 18 since the launch of the Premier League.

JH

SAO PAULO V CORINTHIANS

The sprawling metropolis of Sao Paulo is South America's largest city and its traditional derby is between Corinthians, known as the team of the masses, and Palmeiras, founded by Italian immigrants.

But while that rivalry remains intense, it is being challenged by another local clash, between clubs with contrasting heritages.

Corinthians were founded in 1910 by a group of factory workers inspired by a visit of Corinthian Casuals from England. The city's rapid growth presented Corinthians with the opportunity to attract a large, passionate working-class following who have closely identified with the club's reputation for sweat and suffering.

Sao Paulo FC, by contrast, are the club of the city's elite. Founded in 1935, they made steady progress through the signing of experienced players and consolidated their position with the construction of the giant Morumbi stadium, first opened in 1960 but not completed until 1970.

Corinthians, by contrast, did not own their own home and faced the indignity of using the Morumbi for big occasions.

However, the tables have been turned in recent years. The Morumbi was originally proposed as a venue for the 2014 World Cup but was dropped after the city failed to provide financial guarantees over its renovation. Instead, the newly built Corinthians Arena took its place, stoking the flames of the antipathy with city neighbours Sao Paulo.

JH

▲ **Proud...Sao Paulo fans get in derby mood**

GERMANY V HOLLAND

Despite the first Dutch-German encounter taking place over a century ago, in April 1910, it would take another 64 years for this date on the international calendar to turn into a real flesh-and-blood duel, the genesis being West Germany's 2-1 victory over a far more talented *Oranje* line-up in the 1974 World Cup Final.

Holland – featuring the brilliance of Johan Cruyff, Johan Neeskens, Wim Van Hanegem and Rob Rensenbrink – went into the Final as big favourites. After taking the lead through a Neeskens penalty after just two minutes, they looked to be on their way – only for the resilient Germans to haul themselves back into the game, eventually prevailing thanks to a Paul Breitner spot-kick and a typically clinical Gerd Muller finish.

Many believe Cruyff and company contributed to their own demise and were too arrogant, too hell-bent on humiliating their opponents and avenging Germany's occupation of their country in the Second World War. Whatever the reasons, the Dutch nation was cut to the quick and a cross-border grudge match was born.

The Dutch finally exorcised their demons with a 2-1 victory in a Euro 88 semi-final in Hamburg, where libero Ronald Koeman added fuel to the fire post-match by pretending to wipe his bottom with a German shirt.

More bad blood was spilt at Italia 90, with Rudi Voller and Frank Rijkaard sent off, and Rijkaard spitting at the German.

However, as ex-West Germany defender Karl-Heinz Forster once lamented: "They hate us much more than we hate them."

NB

▼ **Flashpoint...Johan Cruyff argues with World Cup Final referee Jack Taylor**

▶ **Spat...Holland's Frank Rijkaard was caught spitting at Rudi Voller after both were sent off**

AMERICA V GUADALAJARA

▲ **Heads up...Raul Jimenez battles with two Guadalajara defenders**

Traditionally, Club America have represented the country's upper classes and the cosmopolitan aspect of Mexico City, while Guadalajara are the flag-bearers of the small towns and rural areas against the power of the capital.

Known as "*Chivas*" (goats), Guadalajara have a policy of fielding only Mexican players and have put a lot of effort into developing their youth academy, which has become the best in the country, producing such talents as Carlos Salcido, Carlos Vela and Omar Bravo.

This contrasts with the traditional economic power of America, who are owned by giant media group Televisa. Former owner Emilio Azcarraga Milamo says "*Las Aguias*" (the eagles) are "the villain of the movie who buys the best foreigners to defeat the hero, Chivas".

Thus, the philosophy of the clubs, who account for nearly 80 per cent of fans in Mexico between them, could not be more different. Guadalajara's anthem says "in all of Mexico there is always a Chiva brother", while America's Nike advertising campaign urged the other teams to "hate me more".

JH

SARAJEVO V ZELJEZNICAR

Few derbies are as poignant as Sarajevo's as the Bosnian capital suffered a terrible four-year siege during the 1990s. FK Sarajevo's national Kosevo Stadium is surrounded by graveyards, while Zeljeznicar's Grbavica was right on the front line and many buildings nearby are still ruined.

Both pitches had to be cleared of mines before games in the fledging independent Bosnian league could be played.

Historically, there is a certain amount of niggle between the local rivals. Zeljeznicar, the longer established railway workers' club, were forced to offer players to Sarajevo, formed and favoured by the Communist authorities after the war. Yet given the circumstances, trouble is minimal.

If the game is at the Kosevo, both sets of fans stroll up by separate roads and create a noisy atmosphere behind their respective goals. The blue of *Zeljo* followers, the Maniacs, covers the south end, the maroon of FK's *Horde Zla* on the north. Incidents involving teenage tearaways can break out but otherwise the derby passes off without serious incident.

Tensions do arise, however, when the opposition is from Croatian Herzegovina or, in the recently introduced all-Bosnian play-offs, from the Serbian entity.

A recent extra dynamic has been added by FK Olimpik, a Sarajevo side formed during the Bosnian war. The 2015 Bosnian Cup-winners' games with either local rival are known as the "Little City Derby".

PC

▲ Derby day...Sarajevo (hoops) and Zeljeznicar go head to head

BEITAR JERUSALEM V HAPOEL TEL-AVIV

Hostility always arises when Israel's biggest and richest club, Beitar Jerusalem, take on the populist Hapoel Tel-Aviv.

Six-time champions Beitar have their origins in the Zionist youth movement, with many of their fans backing the right-wing Likud party. After crowd disturbances in the 1970s, Beitar were only saved from enforced relegation by parliamentary interference. They recovered to win the cup but were denied a first league title in 1984 when beaten narrowly by Hapoel. The result was a 30-year grudge.

The Red Devils of Hapoel have historic ties with left-wing politics and local trades unions. The club were pioneers, winning the first Palestine Cup in 1928, local championships in the 1930s and the inaugural Asian Champions Cup in 1967.

Further controversy surfaced in 1998 with both clubs vying for the title. In the penultimate round, Beitar visited relegation-threatened Hapoel Beit-Shean and, bizarrely, this game kicked off eight minutes later than the others. Beit-Shean went 1-0 up before their top scorer, Eitan Taib, missed the first penalty of his career. Beitar hit back to lead 2-1 but then Almog Hazan equalised.

Results elsewhere meant Beit-Shean would be spared the drop, but as the clock ticked down during the legendary "Eight Minutes of Disgrace", they practically let Beitar play as they liked and an inevitable late winner secured the title.

PC

▲ No love lost...Hapoel (white) and Beitar players square up

MONCHENGLADBACH V COLOGNE

▲ Trouble...a Cologne ultra is arrested

That the Rhine derby is a heated, win-at-all-cost affair is largely due to the spiky influence of legendary German coach Hennes Weisweiler. In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s he had long spells with both clubs and was especially keen on coming out on top in regional dog-fights, relentlessly pushing an "us and them" attitude and forever looking for a psychological edge.

The 1970s undoubtedly was the heyday of the *Rheinischen* power struggle, with each side going for top-flight glory and containing many German internationals – with the likes of Gladbach's Rainer Bonhof, Gunter Netzer and Berti Vogts, and Cologne stand-outs Wolfgang Overath, Heinz Flohe and Bernhard Cullmann.

Two moments of sporting combat particularly stand out from this epoch: Gladbach's 2-1 victory in the 1973 German Cup Final – in which playmaker Netzer fired in an extra-time winner after making the decision himself to enter the fray as a substitute – and Cologne's photo-finish Bundesliga triumph of 1977-78, when they pipped Gladbach on goal difference.

▲ Tussle...Anthony Ujah of Cologne outmuscles Gladbach's Tony Jantschke

Once a byword for mouthwatering spectacle and goals galore, the western German tussle has been dogged in recent years by fan violence, a sorry chronicle of attacks on opposition fan buses, terrace fights and the surreal sight early this year of Cologne ultras in white boiler suits invading the Borussia Park pitch.

NB

MOHUN BAGAN V EAST BENGAL

▲ Fast and furious...Mohun Bagan clear an East Bengal attack

Confrontation...a fan taunts opposition supporters

The dynamics of Kolkata's football are changing. The city has traditionally been of a hotbed of Indian football, with long-standing rivals Mohun Bagan and East Bengal regularly attracting six-figure crowds to Salt Lake Stadium, India's largest sporting arena; the record stands at 131,000 for a derby game in 1979.

Both clubs have been leading lights in the I-League, the country's current top-flight competition, but face a fresh threat from the newly launched Indian Super League (ISL).

The bid for the Kolkata ISL franchise was won by a consortium featuring former Indian cricket captain Sourav Ganguly and Spanish club Atletico Madrid. Players from Mohun Bagan and East Bengal have been "freelanced" to ISL sides, including Atletico de Kolkata, inaugural winners of the new competition and who also play their home games at Salt Lake Stadium.

An average crowd of 45,171 for the ISL's first season suggests Atletico have support from both sides of the city's football divide. However, 65,000 still turned up to see East Bengal beat Mohun to clinch the local regional title.

Mohun are India's oldest club, formed in 1889 and famous for playing in bare feet against colonial English teams. East Bengal were formed in 1920 following a breakaway from Mohun by players and officials from eastern parts of Bengal (now Bangladesh) amid claims of discrimination.

That sparked a rivalry that continues today, although both clubs face a challenge from Atletico.

JH

ESTEGHLAL V PERSEPOLIS

The biggest derby in Asian club football takes place between Tehran's two biggest outfits and regularly attracts crowds of more than 90,000 to the Azadi Stadium, which they share.

The rivalry is a relatively recent one, with the clubs first playing each other in 1968. Persepolis were only formed in 1963, from the shadow of popular Shahin, who were disbanded by an Iranian federation concerned the club had become too powerful.

Persepolis' popularity among the masses grew through the 1970s while Esteghlal, who were known as Taj before the Islamic revolution of 1979, were associated with the ruling monarchy.

▲ Intense...Persepolis captain Mohammad Nouri keeps an attack going

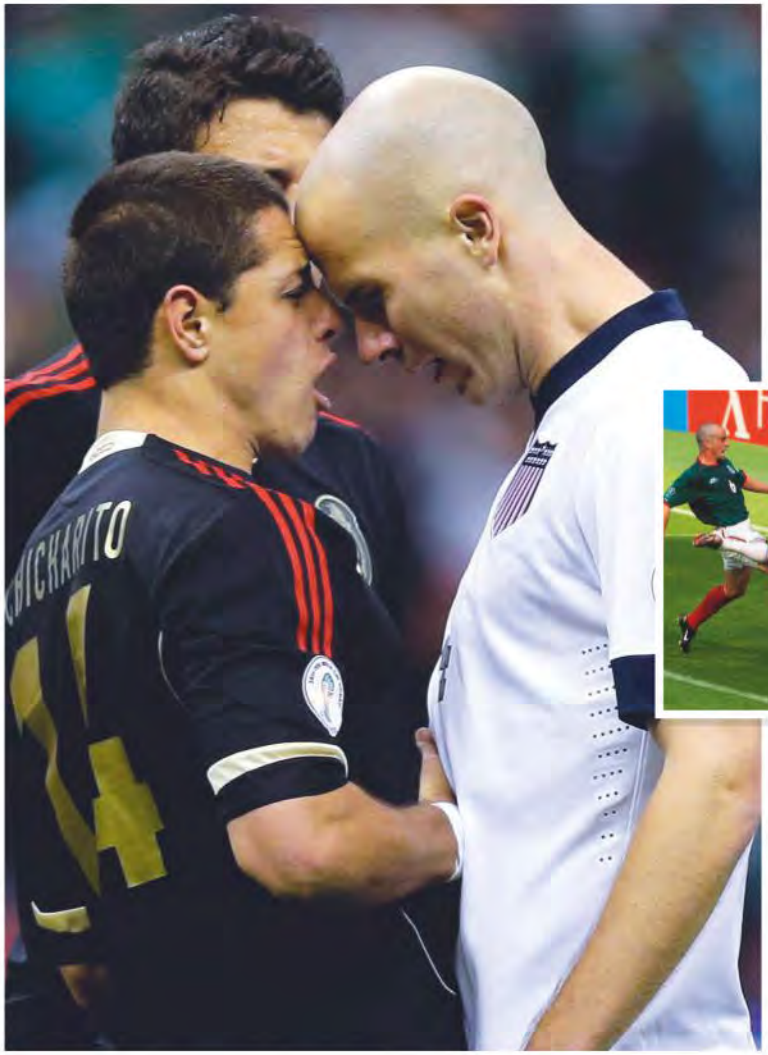
The intensity of the rivalry has at times spilled over. Foreign referees were brought in amid accusations of local bias after a game in 1995 ended in a pitch invasion by Persepolis fans furious at their team conceding two controversial late goals.

Women have traditionally been banned from attending all major sporting events in Iran and, despite government suggestions that the ban might be lifted, religious hardliners have ensured the derby has remained an all-male affair.

JH

▲ Divide...police keep fans apart

USA V MEXICO



▲ Head to head...Mexico's Javier Hernandez (left) and USA midfielder Michael Bradley square up

▼ Emphatic...Landon Donovan scores USA's second goal in their 3-2 win at the 2002 World Cup

Where once Mexico lauded it over its North American neighbours, now the United States and Mexico are even-handed rivals. The rivalry has become more intense over the years, as the US have improved, with their squad enhanced by naturalised Mexicans.

USA fans are regularly outnumbered at home games by US-based Mexicans, while Mexico regularly play games in the States, attracting bigger crowds and earning more money than they would do at home.

A key change in their relations occurred at the 2002 World Cup, when the USA won the second-round encounter, Landon Donovan scoring the extra-time winner for a 3-2 victory in which Mexico's Rafael Marquez was sent off.

Former USA keeper Brad Friedel believes the key match took place in 1997, commenting: "We got a draw in Mexico City, with 115,000 there and they hate Americans with a passion. There were bags of urine being thrown at me. As keepers, we are the ones getting hit all the time. 'Oh, more urine'.

"It was then that Mexico started to accept us as a soccer nation. They always claimed that we could only beat them in the United States and in freezing cold temperatures. They take us to Estadio Azteca and the game kicks off 1pm in the middle of June: stage five smog alerts, 35C, at altitude, we're dying after 15 minutes and they think that's fair!"

JH

RAJA V WYDAD

The clash between Casablanca's two biggest sides is one of African club football's fiercest rivalries and has its roots in the colonial rule of Morocco by the French.

The imposing Stade Mohamed V has a capacity of 67,000 and is home to both Raja and Wydad. And when the duo meet it is frequently a violent affair – both on and off the pitch.

Raja were founded in 1949 and have their roots in the struggle against French rule at a time when the indigenous population were offered few opportunities in civil society. Still regarded as the people's club, they adopted an all-Moroccan line-up and managed to bypass bans on the leadership of clubs coming from the local ranks.

Wydad Athletic Club are a decade older and still seen as elitist, although those class lines of yesteryear have long since been blurred.

The rivalry these days has evolved into the search for dominance in the domestic league and success at continental level, where both sides have been crowned African champions in the past.

In more recent times, the derby has become a forum for disaffected youth to vent their frustration, leading to frequent fights between rival factions – and deaths.

In 2007, a derby was ordered to be played behind closed doors as punishment for crowd trouble.

JH

▲ High stakes...Wydad (in red) take on Raja in the big derby

PARTIZAN V RED STAR

It's a short walk downhill from Red Star's Marakana stadium to Partizan's rundown ground – but it's not a stroll for the timid on Belgrade derby day. Since the break-up of Yugoslavia, and the lack of Croatian opposition, the *Vechiti* ("eternal") derby is the only show in town.

Partizan and Red Star were formed in 1945 as Tito took over post-war Yugoslavia, and both have been influenced by Serbia's many upheavals since.

After Tito died in 1980, Yugoslav fans adopted the customs of Italy's ultras, with flares, fists and choreographed displays. In 1991, war broke out, just as Red Star won their only European Cup. Their fans, the *Delije* of the North Stand, included those who would serve as paramilitaries in the killing fields of Croatia and Bosnia. Fan club leader Arkan recruited his notorious volunteer force, the Tigers, on the Red Star terraces.

▼ **Battle...Red Star (in red) and Partizan**

Partizan were still representatives of the Yugoslav Army, whose neutrality was soon exposed as the war spread. Given the later NATO bombing of Belgrade, hyperinflation and Serbia's pariah status under Slobodan Milosevic, it is no wonder that support for either club became more radical.

Many of those storming parliament in 2000 to overthrow the dictator were hardcore fans of either club. A week later, there was little solidarity on offer on derby day – only a mass fight that spilled onto the pitch. In April 2015, 35 police officers were injured and 41 fans arrested as violence held up another ugly clash, while the game itself was a drab 0-0 draw.

PC

▲ **Trouble brewing...riot police patrol in front of the terraces on derby day at Red Star's Marakana stadium**

ALGERIA V EGYPT

The scene outside the Cairo International Stadium resembled a war zone. It was 2009, a few minutes after Egypt had beaten Algeria 2-0 in a World Cup qualifier with an injury-time goal in front of over 100,000 ecstatic fans.

The match had taken place in a febrile atmosphere. Egypt were the reigning African Nations Cup champions, having won back-to-back titles in 2006 and 2008. Yet the country hadn't been to a World Cup finals since Italia 90. And it had looked like they would miss out on Africa's first finals in South Africa, too.

Algeria led the group going into the final game in Cairo. Egypt needed to win by three goals to qualify, although a 2-0 result would see both teams finish on the same points and same goal difference, forcing a play-off a few days later in Sudan. But there was an added dimension, an open wound left from the last time the two countries played.

While there had always been a low-level political and cultural undercurrent when North African countries played each other, this rivalry was rooted in the so called "Death Match" – the 1989 qualifier between Egypt and Algeria for the 1990 finals.

Algeria were then Africa's finest team, but they lost 1-0 and riots broke out on the pitch between players and staff. The Egyptian team doctor lost an eye and Algeria's Lakhdar Belloumi was blamed. An international arrest warrant was issued by Egypt despite the former African Player of the Year pleading innocence.

Almost two decades later, the 2009 clash brought everything to the surface. The two countries' presidents met beforehand to cool tensions and rescind Belloumi's arrest warrant, but it wasn't enough. The week before the match the Algerian embassy in Cairo was attacked, as was the Algerian team bus and several of their fans. After the 2-0 victory the streets filled with celebrating Egyptians setting off fireworks and smashing windows. Riots broke out across the world: Egyptian businesses were attacked in Algeria and supporters of the teams clashed in Riyadh, Marseilles, London and beyond.

Yet it was Algeria who had the final say, beating Egypt 1-0 in Sudan to reach the 2010 finals. If Algeria and Egypt are drawn in the same group again for Russia 2018, expect sparks to fly again.

JM

▼ **Anger...Egypt fans after they lost a World Cup play-off to Algeria**

▶ **Ill feeling...Egypt (red) and Algerian players clash during the play-off**

SAINT-ETIENNE V LYON

With their pot-shots at each other via the media, Lyon president Jean-Michel Aulas and Saint-Etienne counterpart Bernard Caiazzo sometimes give the impression that they only see a football rivalry as an executive quarrel. But in the case of the Rhone-Alpes turf war, nothing could be further from the truth.

The Lyon/Saint-Etienne spat is a living, breathing traditional derby, in existence since October 1951 and still sparking passion aplenty and wholesale ill-will.

In many ways, it's a collision of opposites. The so-called bourgeois city of Lyon and the proletarian old mining and manufacturing centre of Saint-Etienne. OL's silky, cultured style of play versus the combative, sweat-soaked approach of *Les Verts* ("the greens"). The British-style fervour of the crowd at the Geoffroy Guichard Stadium in Saint-Etienne, in contrast to the far less noisy atmosphere at Lyon's Stade de Gerland, which is soon to be replaced by a brand-new arena.

For a substantial proportion of their 111 competitive meetings, the working script has been that of kingpin and outsider. Ten-times French champions between 1957 and 1981, Saint-Etienne more or less swept all before them in that period, while Lyon enjoyed the same omnipotence in the opening decade of the new millennium, claiming seven consecutive national titles.

A big scalp invariably was the big prize and that's how the locals became hooked.

NB

▲ **Intense...Saint-Etienne crowd out Lyon striker Alexandre Lacazette**

AL AHLY

ZAMALEK

The rivalry between Egypt's two biggest clubs is such that, these days, the eternal Cairo derby has to be staged in a different country

The futuristic Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium in the oasis city of Al Ain – 100 miles south of the UAE capital Abu Dhabi – hadn't seen anything quite like it before.

The home of reigning UAE Arabian Gulf League champions Al Ain usually hosts crowds numbering in their hundreds. In fact, the arena had only once come anywhere near filling its 26,000 capacity, and that was when Manchester City – owned by a member of the Abu Dhabi royal family and festooned with star names – were welcomed with open arms as they played there to mark the stadium's opening.

But on October 15, 2015, the Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium could have been filled at least four times over. And the reception was far from friendly.

One half of the stadium was coloured red, the other white, for the season-opening Egyptian Super Cup between Al Ahly and Zamalek, in the latest instalment of the Cairo derby.

Between them, the two clubs have won the Egyptian league title 49 times, with Ahly winning 37 to Zamalek's 12, while in Africa Ahly have won the continent's Champions League a record eight times to Zamalek's five.

Egyptian football – indeed, Cairene society itself – has long been defined by your colour and your team. It is a rivalry that in many ways transcends football; throwing class, colonial politics, nationalism and religion into a combustible mix.

It is Africa's biggest match and over 100,000 people would cram into the Cairo International Stadium to see the action live, while the city's perpetually teeming streets would pause for 90 minutes. Violence would often flare and players on both sides would be hounded by the opposition's fans over goals and perceived slights for years afterwards. Such was the mistrust that foreign referees had to be brought in to ensure, in a city where you were either the red of Ahly or the white of Zamalek, bias could be eliminated.

Yet it has been almost five years since the two African giants have met in such circumstances in Cairo.

Following the 2011 revolution that toppled former president Hosni Mubarak – in a revolution where the ultras of both clubs stood together on the barricades – Egyptian football has been rocked by a series of tragedies that threatened to irrevocably change the game and the derby. Among the most infamous of these was the killing of 72 Ahly fans after a 2012 league match in Port Said and the death of over 20 Zamalek supporters during a crush outside a stadium earlier this year. Football in Egypt is now a game enjoyed only on TV, played behind closed doors.

But this year's Super Cup was played in the UAE – a country where a 300,000 strong Egyptian expat population live – and for 90 minutes Africa's greatest rivalry was reignited.

Ahly began life in 1907 as the first Egyptian-run club. Back then, the country was effectively controlled by the British

▲ Stopped...Zamalek's Kahraba is halted by the Al Ahly defence during the 2015 Super Cup clash

◄ Fervour...An Al Ahly fan whips up support during the derby in 2011

"Ahly became the team of the devout, but Zamalek was the team of the middle classes"

Former Egypt international Ayman Younes

and French, who had interests in the Suez Canal. The name translates as "the national" in Arabic and the club was seen as a nationalistic symbol against what it regarded as foreign occupation.

Four years later, Zamalek were formed, with a Belgian president, and the team was set up without any restrictions on who could join or support it – be they colonialists, poets or middle-class shopkeepers. The team has had several names, and was briefly named after King Farouk before being changed, following his abdication in the aftermath of the 1952 Egyptian Revolution, to Zamalek – after the island in the Nile on which the club can be found.

While Ahly were seen as an Arab, nationalist, Muslim side, Zamalek were viewed as a mixed team – and it is a division that still drives the derby today.

"Fifty years ago, Ahly became the team of the devout, but Zamalek was the team of the middle classes," explained former Egypt international and Zamalek legend Ayman Younes, who tasted the hatred first hand, having scored a hatful of goals against Ahly – which still upsets their fans, even today.

"If I go to the stadium today. I still have to go without my car as they break everything," he said. "I had a lot of problems with Ahly fans. In 1990 I found my BMW car on its side and they signed it 'Ahly fans'. And that was when we lost, 2–0, but they remembered that I scored in the first game earlier in the season."

Younes also recalled an occasion when 5,000 Ahly fans turned up at his house!

However, the derby changed forever in the aftermath of the 2011 revolution. The clubs' ultras groups – Al Ahly's Ahlawy and Zamalek's Ultras White Knights (UWK) – played a hugely important role after uniting in Tahrir Square, with many Egyptian people considering them the "protectors" of the revolution for their success in fighting and subduing the police during those torrid and anarchic weeks.

But the fans paid a price and on February 1, 2012, 72 Ahly fans were killed when they were attacked by Al Masry fans after a match. What appeared at first to be fan violence later turned out to be something more sinister.

The prosecutor's report later found collusion between Masry fans and the security forces, and dozens were jailed – with several even sentenced to death. The club and many of its players – including captain Mohamed Aboutrika, who held a dying fan in his arms in the dressing room at Port Said – considered the deaths to have been planned; a plot by the regime to punish the ultras for their role in the revolution.

The military, and later the government, denied their involvement.

"Supporting Al Ahly isn't like just supporting a football club, it is like a religion," said the club's former captain Shady Mohamed shortly after Port Said, in an interview that took place in his home city of Alexandria, midway through a march held in honour of the Ahly fans who lost their lives.

He hadn't played for Ahly for years, but still felt it was important to be there, commenting: "I had to come. Ahly never leaves you."

The season was cancelled in the aftermath of Port Said and supporters were banned from Egypt's stadiums for the foreseeable future. Last season some were allowed back, but a stampede outside one game – after the police could clearly be seen firing tear gas into the crowd – resulted in the deaths of over 20 Zamalek fans. But unlike after Port Said, there were no calls for justice.

The military had deposed president Mohamed Morsi, Egypt's first truly

"Football is for fans. Open the doors, we are not terrorists"

Al Ahly fans

▼ **Behind closed doors...the derby is played out at an empty Cairo International Stadium after the nationwide ban on fans**

▲ Threat...but Zamalek's pressure was not enough to win the 2015 Super Cup

◀ Flare...a Zamalek fan at a CAF Champions League game

▼ Victors...2015 Egyptian Super Cup winners Al Ahly

democratic head of state, and he was later replaced by Abdel Fattah El Sisi, a military man. The ultras of the two clubs were now seen as potential fifth columnists. Instead of criticising the police in the aftermath of the tragedy, the president of Zamalek condemned the UWK as "traitors" after earlier branding them "terrorists".

When this season's league campaign began in October, Ahly beat El Gaish 1-0 in front of an empty stadium. But outside, thousands of Ahly fans gathered with flares and songs demanding to be let in. "Football is for fans," they sang. "Open the doors, we are not terrorists."

But the only place that the biggest rivalry in Egyptian football could once again be felt was thousands of miles away in Al Ain.

The Super Cup lived up to expectations, with Ahly coming from behind to beat Zamalek 3-2 – although not before the referee and his assistants left the pitch following a 22-man fight, which broke out after Ahly's Ramadan Sobhi, the player earmarked as Aboutrika's replacement, stood on the ball in a bizarre act of showboating.

After the final whistle, Zamalek fans could be seen crying. The Cairo derby may have paused, but the passion will always remain the same.

James Montague

SCOTLAND

Since their first official game in 1872, in the world's oldest international fixture, the two neighbours have met 112 times, with England winning 47 to Scotland's 41. In one of the most infamous clashes, visiting fans invaded the Wembley pitch after Scotland won 2-1 and collapsed the stadium goalposts.

GALATASARAY V FENERBAHCE

For sheer intensity, few derbies rival Istanbul's clash of the titans. Along with the long pre-match build-up of drums, flares and ritual chanting, there is usually more than just local pride at stake as all but two Turkish league titles since 2004 have gone to either Gala or Fener.

Following the fatal stabbing of a Fenerbahce fan at the derby in 2013, visiting supporters have been kept away from the game. Therefore, this fixture is 50,000 baying Turks against 11 men.

▼ Row...Gala's Gokhan Zan (right) and Fener's Mamadou Niang

with a backdrop of explosions bursting out over the Bosphorus.

Geographically, the pair are separated by a continental divide. Fenerbahce's Sukru Saracoglu stadium is on the Asian side of the city, while Galatasaray have historical ties to the Lycee school in the Beyoglu area of town.

Working-class Fener used to be the most popular club in the land and were Turkey's main representative in Europe during the 1960s and 1970s. However, Gala have long since taken this mantle, building the 52,000-capacity Turk Telekom Arena and setting a world record for the loudest crowd shortly afterwards.

The first hint of trouble was in 1934, when the derby game was abandoned after fighting between rival players. And the most notorious incident was in the 1996 Turkish Cup Final, when victorious Gala boss Graeme Souness planted his club's flag in the Fenerbahce centre circle.

PC

▲ Under attack...Galatasaray players try to protect themselves from missiles as they leave the Sukru Saracoglu pitch

NACIONAL V PENAROL

▲ Collision course...Penarol (in yellow and black) and Nacional

The oldest club derby outside of Britain is that between Montevideo's big two, who can both trace their origins back to the 19th century.

Nacional were founded in 1899, eight years after Central Uruguayan Railways Cricket Club, who gained the affections of Italian immigrants and changed their name to that of the neighbourhood in which they were based, Penarol, in 1913. Nacional, whose name stresses their opposition to the foreign-owned CURCC, would become a focus for Spanish immigrants, who were wealthier than the Italians.

The two clubs continue to dominate Uruguayan domestic football and between them they have won 20 of the last 24 league titles. In total, Penarol have 47 titles to Nacional's 45 but success on the wider continental stage is a thing of the past. Penarol lost to Santos in the 2011 Libertadores Final but last won the competition in 1987; Nacional claimed their third in 1988.

JH

▼ Deadly...Nacional's Alvaro Recoba (no20)

EL SALVADOR V HONDURAS

▲ Battle lines...Salvadoran soldiers take up arms against Honduras

In June 1969, a World Cup qualifying play-off, in which El Salvador defeated Honduras 3-2, sparked the so-called "Soccer War" – the first, and so far only, example of a military conflict being provoked by a football match.

Tensions over immigration had been rising for some time in Honduras, and Salvadoran immigrants had been stripped of their land rights. The day before the decisive match, the two countries severed diplomatic relations and both began mobilising troops on the border.

In the aftermath of the match, Hondurans, frustrated by the defeat, attacked Salvadoran exiles in their country. El Salvador's government retaliated with an armed attack against Honduras, sparking a wider conflict.

Fighting lasted a week – it was also dubbed the "100 hour war" – and around 250 Honduran soldiers were killed as well as 2,000 civilians. Combined Salvadoran casualties were estimated at 2,000.

The World Cup play-off took place on neutral ground in Mexico City after an earlier match, in the Honduran capital Tegucigalpa, was marred by fighting between rival fans.

JH

BORUSSIA DORTMUND v SCHALKE

Face off...Schalke's Benedikt Howedes makes his feelings known to Dortmund skipper Mats Hummels

Separated by a mere 20 miles, the two big-hitters from western Germany's former industrial heartland have been battling for local supremacy since 1925. And 90 years on, their encounters generate more heat and invective than ever.

Yellow-and-black in opposition to royal blue; the city of Dortmund against Gelsenkirchen; Ballspielverein Borussia Dortmund versus Schalke 04. No other derby in Germany electrifies and polarises as much the clash of the Ruhr powerhouses in the "*Revierderby*".

No wonder Dortmund coach Thomas Tuchel and his players celebrated November's 3-2 victory at home to their arch-rivals as though they had lifted a trophy. With so much local pride and identity at stake, every meeting between the pair is a pressure cooker of intensity in which defeat is simply not an option.

Whatever their team's form of the moment, fans on both sides of the divide expect their favourites to approach the game in cocky, all-conquering mood – and heaven help anyone who tries to play down its significance.

Concerned by his team's poor results of late, coupled with a lack of squad depth, Schalke boss Andre Breitenreiter made the mistake of describing the recent derby as a "bonus game", a match in which his charges had nothing to lose. He instantly found himself accused of surrendering. He will learn.

The main ingredient in the confrontational nature of the Ruhr face-off is the proximity of the two sets of supporters. They live together, work together and play together. At derby time, very few in the region remain neutral, and in the offices, factories and bars it is the only topic of conversation; an obsession that has gained further traction with the advent of social media.

Allegiances are hardcore and deadly serious, even to the point of some fans refusing to refer to the other side's real location. Rather than talk of Dortmund, Schalke followers speak of "Ludenscheid-Nord", which is in fact 25 miles away, while the BVB faithful prefer "Herne-West" (another old Ruhr mining town) to Gelsenkirchen.

Yet while Dortmund and Schalke fans would strenuously deny it, they are mirror images of each other. Both clubs boast huge and religiously loyal working-class fan-bases. Both have their roots in the area's foundries, furnaces and mines. Both were initially built on the talents of Polish immigrant players. Both are devoted to a hard-running, all-action style of play. And both know that players who are not 100 per cent committed to the cause have no future at either club.

Both are also extremely successful. Although Schalke have never won the Bundesliga, they were the most potent force in the land during the inter-war years, claiming six national titles in that period. They also won the UEFA Cup in 1997 and latterly have regularly featured in the Champions League.

Apart from Dortmund's conquest of the European Cup-winners Cup in 1966, the bulk of their achievements have been in the last two decades: five Bundesliga titles, the Champions League in 1997 and the World Club Cup the same year.

During the past 40 to 50 years, the rivalry has taken on a more virulent, uncompromising tone and there are two schools of thought as to why this should be. Some historians claim the bad blood was borne out of the 1971 match-fixing scandal, when many Schalke stars – among them German internationals Klaus Fischer, Klaus Fichtel and Reinhard Libuda – were banned for taking bribes. Half a lifetime later, older Dortmunder still call their rivals "FC Meineid 04" (FC Perjury).

Another theory is that the well was poisoned by Dortmund's winning streak in the mid-1990s under coach Ottmar Hitzfeld, which saw the Gelsenkirchener grow increasingly envious of the huge popularity at home and abroad of such "Schwarz-Gelben" idols as Matthias Sammer, Jurgen Kohler and Karl-Heinz Riedle.

The story of the 168 competitive Ruhr derbies – comprising 68 Schalke wins, 59 Dortmund victories and 41 draws – is choc-full of folklore, unusual events, surprise headliners and one-upmanship: the 10-0 thumping Schalke handed out in October 1940; Dortmund's first-ever derby triumph in October 1943; the sight, in September 1969, of tough-tackling Schalke defender Friedel Rausch being bitten on the backside by a police dog after spectators spilled onto the pitch; and Schalke goalkeeper Jens Lehmann somehow managing to head home a last-minute equaliser in a 2-2 draw in Dortmund in December 1997.

An equally memorable occasion was the penultimate round of the 2006-07 Bundesliga campaign when Dortmund's 2-0 home win effectively put an end to Schalke's title aspirations. Technically, the mid-table Dortmunder had nothing to play for that afternoon, but energised by thoughts of tripping up their foes, gave all they had and more. To the Yellow-and-Blacks, the spoils of the day and the commemorative "*Schadenfreude*" T-shirts; to Schalke the tears of frustration.

Strangely for such a tribal state of affairs, it has not been uncommon for players to switch camps. After exploding on the scene at Schalke in the 1960s, wing-wizard Libuda later enjoyed three excellent seasons at the Westfalenstadion; Lehmann was an outstanding servant for both clubs and so was attacking midfielder Andreas Moller, whose defection to Schalke in 2000 sent shockwaves through the Ruhr.

At first, dyed-in-the-wool Royal Blue fans would not accept Moller as one of their own, promising boycotts and organising petitions. However, they quickly changed their minds when he began to turn on the style and inspired them to within a whisker of the Bundesliga crown in 2001. From enemy to hero in one easy lesson.

That's Dortmund and Schalke for you; love and hate.

Nick Bidwell

Crowd control...police separate rival factions before the derby

Rather than talk of Dortmund, Schalke followers speak of "'Ludenscheid-Nord", while the BVB faithful prefer "Herne-West" to Gelsenkirchen

Pain...Lincoln can't believe Schalke have just lost the 2007 title to their greatest rivals

ARGENTINA V

Argentina versus Brazil may be special but for history, passion and emotion there's nothing like the River Plate derby

"It's probably the most important derby in the world," said Argentina coach Gerardo Martino before a friendly against Brazil last year. "Its significance lies in the history of the two teams and the players they can choose from."

Without doubt, Argentina against Brazil is something very special, a duel for bragging rights between neighbours and rivals who can claim to consistently produce the game's leading stars.

But Argentina have another local derby which, as well as present-day piquancy, has even more history.

Brazil's third place at the 1938 World Cup was the first real sign of what was to come from them. By then, however, the remote outpost of South America had already established itself as a leading centre of the game. It had hosted the first continental tournament and set off a fervour for football which led directly to the birth of the World Cup – which was first staged in South America. The Final was contested by two teams from the continent: hosts Uruguay and Argentina.

The rivalry between these River Plate neighbours stands at the heart of the game's growth as a worldwide phenomenon. In many places, football began as an elite pursuit then permeated down through society. It happened in Argentina and Uruguay – and at a time of mass immigration and rapid urbanisation, it happened with breathtaking speed.

In the course of barely a generation, River Plate football threw off its aristocratic, anglicised roots and became

▼ Golden...Uruguay's 1928 Olympic winners

URUGUAY

▲ **No doubt... Hector Castro scores the fourth goal as Uruguay beat Argentina in the 1930 World Cup Final**

an issue of national importance, a mass sport fuelled by passion – and already giving signs of some of the problems that such emotion could bring.

An annual challenge match between teams from Buenos Aires and Montevideo, the two capitals, began in 1888. Set up by local British residents and staged on Queen Victoria's birthday, the contests took place in an atmosphere of aristocratic chivalry. It was common for penalties to be missed on purpose in an acknowledgement that an opponent could not possibly have intentionally committed a foul in the area.

But while some of this spirit lingered, by the time the second Copa America took place in 1917 the British influence had greatly diminished. The FAs of Argentina and Uruguay were locally run, with the teams featuring local players.

In the last match of the tournament, with the trophy at stake, Uruguay were leading 1-0 with 20 minutes to go when their goalkeeper, Cayetano Saporiti, was injured in a clash with Argentina striker Alfredo Martins. Saporiti was unable to continue, and with no substitutions allowed, Uruguay were down to 10 men. Martins offered to leave the field to even

"Other countries have their history, Uruguay has its football"

Former Uruguay coach, Ondino Viera

the numbers but Uruguay captain Jorge Pacheco insisted he stayed, since the collision had been an accident.

In front of their own fans, Uruguay held on to win, successfully defending the title they had won a year earlier in the inaugural version in Argentina – which had pointed the way towards a more aggressive future.

The 1916 game at the Gimnasia y Esgrima ground in Buenos Aires had attracted such a large crowd that fans spilled onto the pitch. And when it became clear that the game would not take place, some reacted by setting the stands on fire. The match was eventually played a day later at Racing's stadium in Avellaneda.

The Copa led to a rapid rise in playing

▲ **Row...Argentina (blue) and Uruguay scuffle at their Copa America clash in Chile in June**

▲ **No ceremony...Uruguay's Egidio Arevalo makes his presence felt on Javier Pastore**

standards and the consolidation of a specific South American style: balletic and imaginative. The stakes of the Argentina-Uruguay rivalry were raised much higher when it became clear that this was much more than a local squabble – and world supremacy was on the table.

Uruguay effectively kick-started the game's modern era when they turned up unheralded at the 1924 Olympics in Paris and cruised to the gold medal, playing a brand of exuberant football that captured the European imagination. Back home, Argentina suffered a crisis of jealousy.

A home and away challenge against the Uruguayans was swiftly arranged. The sides drew 1-1 in Montevideo, but the return in Buenos Aires was halted after crowd encroachment. It was replayed a few days later, by which time a giant fence had been erected to keep the fans off the pitch – a landmark moment in South American football. The home fans satisfied themselves with throwing pebbles at the Uruguayans, who were beaten 2-1.

With the rivalry now fully up and running, Argentina also travelled to the 1928 Olympics in Amsterdam, where they met Uruguay in the Final. Huge crowds gathered in Buenos Aires and Montevideo to listen to loudspeakers relaying cables from Holland as Uruguay retained their title.

Capitalising on the interest in the game the Olympics had generated, and realising the need for a competition open to professionals as well as amateurs, the World Cup was born. The inaugural version was staged by Uruguay in 1930, the Final a River Plate affair with the hosts beating Argentina 4-2. Afterwards the Uruguayan consulate in Buenos Aires was stoned.

By now, as Ondino Viera – Uruguay's coach at the 1966 World Cup – would later put it, there was validity in the idea that "other countries have their history, Uruguay has its football". As the great Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano said: "The sky blue shirt was proof of the existence of the nation. Uruguay was not a mistake. Football dragged the tiny country out of the shadows of universal anonymity."

▼ **Crash landing... Diego Lugano goes tumbling under a challenge from Nicolas Burdisso**

> "The sky blue shirt was proof of the existence of the nation. Uruguay was not a mistake"
>
> Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano

Even more than that, in both countries, football had proved a rallying point for the creation of an identity in lands largely comprised of recently arrived immigrants, chiefly from Italy and Spain.

The countries' ethnic, linguistic and cultural proximities makes the derby a little like an England-Scotland game – a clash between big and little brother in which the smaller can punch above its weight.

Uruguay have kept right on punching, a country with a population of three-and-a-half million still refusing to bow down to one of 40m. Four years ago, in Argentina, Uruguay achieved a record 15th Copa America win. As the players celebrated on the pitch, they danced and sang "Uruguay are champions, just like the first time".

It seems plenty of chapters are still to be written in the old River Plate rivalry.

Tim Vickery

OLYMPIAKOS V PANATHINAIKOS

"The Game of the Eternal Enemies" has given rise to so much trouble that the fixture has long been played out before home fans only.

In 2015 it even stopped the whole Greek league, with invasions and missile throwing by the Panathinaikos crowd at the Apostolos Nikolaidis Stadium causing the country's sports minister to suspend all domestic football the following day. However, he soon went back on his rash pronouncement – and Olympiakos duly won their fifth league title on the bounce.

▼ **Take cover... Panathinaikos players are pelted**

While Olympiakos' fan base is drawn from blue-collar workers in the port of Piraeus, Panathinaikos are typified by the wealthier support of Ampelokipoi in the comfortable north-west of Athens.

In an infamous cup semi-final between the two in 1964, Olympiakos fans literally broke up the Apostolos Nikolaidis piece by piece. The game was abandoned and the trophy awarded to AEK. The away-fan ban was imposed in 2004 after the equally notorious derby the year before, missiles rained onto the pitch non-stop.

And the country's biggest rivalry doesn't just apply to football.

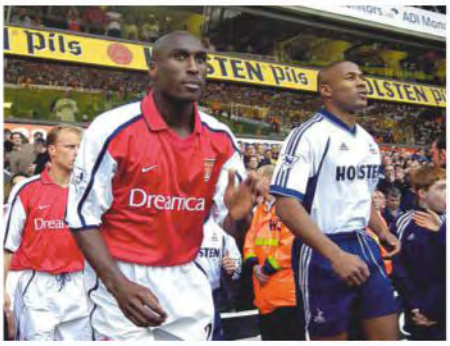
Ten years ago, all team sports were banned for a fortnight after supporters from these rival clubs clashed in the Athens suburb of Peania before a women's volleyball fixture, claiming one fatality. In 1995, a basketball match between the two had the same tragic consequences.

PC

▲ **Aggravation...Olympiakos (in stripes) and Panathinaikos face off in another heated derby-day confrontation**

ARSENAL V TOTTENHAM

Second best...Arsenal's Olivier Giroud is beaten by two Tottenham defenders


Switch...Sol Campbell (near right) has played for both clubs

Chelsea may have become London's most successful team over the past decade thanks to Roman Abramovich's billions, but the North London derby between Arsenal and Tottenham remains the fixture where far more is at stake than just points.

The rivalry dates back to 1913, when Arsenal left their original home in Woolwich, South London, and relocated to Highbury, some four miles from Tottenham's ground in White Hart Lane.

Tensions increased when the English top division was expanded to 22 teams in 1919. The convention was that clubs who would have been relegated the previous season remained in the division, with the top two teams from the second joining them. This would have seen Tottenham, who had finished bottom, stay up in the new division. But Spurs were relegated and instead of Barnsley, who had finished third in the second division, taking their place, fifth-placed Arsenal were promoted.

The Arsenal chairman, Henry Norris, was a prominent figure in the Football Association and his connections were alleged to have secured Arsenal's elevation. Tottenham regained their top-flight status the following season – and the fierce rivalry has continued ever since.

A number of managers have crossed the divide – notably Terry Neill and George Graham – to take charge of both clubs, but few players have dared. Pat Jennings and Sol Campbell are two who have.

JH

NORTH KOREA V SOUTH KOREA

The two countries – created when Korea was divided after the Second World War – are still technically at war after failing to resume diplomatic relations when the Korea War ended in 1953.

With little hope for reunification, the two have played each other on a number of occasions – although only once in the North: a 1990 friendly in which North Korea recorded their sole victory.

In 1993, North Korea lost a World Cup qualifier to South Korea and finished bottom of their group, prompting the country's leaders to withdraw from international football for five years.

The rivalry intensified during the 2010 World Cup qualifiers, at a time of heightened political tension between the countries. Matches were staged in Shanghai rather than North Korea because the North refused to play the South's national anthem in Pyongyang or display its flag.

North Korea accused South Korea of poisoning its players with an "adulterated foodstuff" ahead of the game in Seoul, which they lost 1-0. They were also unhappy with refereeing decisions during the game, claiming Jong Tae-se's header had crossed the line before it was cleared.

"The match turned into a theatre of plot-breeding and swindling," stated the North's official Korean Central News Agency. "It is as clear as noonday that it was a product of [South Korea president] Lee Myung-bak's moves for confrontation."

JH

Northern chill...South Korea's Kim Do-heon is crowded out

BALAJ
19

SERBIA ▽ ALBANIA

The simmering tension between the two countries that came to a head with the break-up of Yugoslavia – and continues over Kosovo – reached boiling point in October 2014 when they met in a Euro 2016 qualifier in Belgrade. After a drone flew into the Partizan Stadium towing a flag with pro-Albanian sentiments, Serbian supporters ran onto the pitch and attacked visiting players.

TURKEY v ARMENIA

What was at first seen as a diplomatic nightmare was, instead, seized upon as a diplomatic opportunity. In 2008, Turkey were drawn in a qualification group for the 2010 World Cup finals in South Africa that included Spain, Bosnia, Belgium and neighbouring Armenia.

The game with Armenia presented several problems. Firstly, Ankara and Yerevan had not established diplomatic relations since Armenia declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Secondly, and probably more importantly, the border between the two nations had been firmly shut for more than 15 years.

The two countries were not on speaking terms thanks to one of the darkest moments of the 20th century: the thorny issue of whether the deaths of as many as 1.5million Armenians at the hands of the Ottoman Empire, from 1915 onwards, should be classed as a genocide. Turkey

▲ Crunch qualifier...Armenia (white) v Turkey

vehemently denies a planned destruction of a people; almost all genocide scholars and most Western nations – including Germany and Canada – believe it was.

The game in Armenia looked at first as if it could be explosive, with Armenian nationalists planning to picket the game. Then something extraordinary happened.

"I hereby invite President Gul [of Turkey] to visit Armenia to enjoy the match together with me in the stadium," Armenia's president Serzh Sargsyan wrote in a *Wall Street Journal* opinion piece a few months before the game. "Thus we will announce a new symbolic start in our relations.

"Whatever our differences, there are certain cultural, humanitarian and sports links that our peoples share, even with a closed border."

▼ Building bridges... Armenia's Serzh Sargsyan (left) and Turkish president Abdullah Gul

Gul accepted and made the first visit to Armenia by a Turkish head of state in modern times, while 5,000 Turkish supporters were given rare permission to travel to Yerevan. The build-up to the match was tense, almost relegating the football to second place.

"This is only a football game, it is not a war," said Turkey coach Fetih Terim. "We cannot carry the weight of history on our shoulders."

> "Whatever our differences, there are certain cultural, humanitarian and sports links that our peoples share, even with a closed border"
>
> Armenian president Serzh Sargsyan

Protesters lined the route of Gul's motorcade to the stadium, but the match passed peacefully, with Turkey winning 2-0. Shortly before the return match in Bursa – also won 2-0 by Turkey – foreign ministers from the two countries signed an agreement, laying out a road map towards full diplomatic relations.

As popular as the club game is in world football, only international football possesses that level of influence, power and potency. While club football's local identities are being diluted by globalisation, international football has maintained its core raison d'etre as one of the last unshakable symbols of identity and nationhood that a country or people can clearly recognise.

It is perhaps because of this that football is at its most political when it comes to the international game. Rivalries tend to be rooted not just on pure geographical proximity, as most of the great derbies in the club game are, but in war and conflict. Armenia and Turkey would not have faced each other in any other arena other than a sporting one.

George Orwell famously wrote that football was "war minus the shooting". The phrase came from his 1945 essay *The Sporting Spirit*, about a Russian team playing a series of bad-tempered exhibition matches in the UK. It is full of observations on how sport in general, and football in particular, is an extension of the political realm, which feeds what he viewed as an evil nationalism.

"If you wanted to add to the vast fund of ill-will existing in the world at this moment," he wrote, "you could hardly do it better than by a series of football matches between Jews and Arabs, Germans and Czechs, Indians and British, Russians and Poles, and Italians and Jugoslavs [sic], each

▲ Building a wall...Armenian defend Semih Senturk's free-kick during a 2010 World Cup qualifier in Yerevan

▲ **Pride...Armenian fans unfurl their national flag in the Ataturk Stadium before the game in Turkey**

match to be watched by a mixed audience of 100,000 spectators." Seventy years on, those matches are the most sought-after in the world game. The biggest events watched on TV are football matches between national teams. The most watched single world event is the World Cup. Half-empty stadiums fill to the brim when North play South Korea, Holland play Germany, Honduras play El Salvador (the first football match to spark a war, as it did in 1969), Serbia play Croatia and Scotland play England. Each rivalry is rooted in a list of historic grievances and bloodshed.

Rivalry as proxy for war has long been a staple of the international calender. When Yugoslavia broke apart in the 1990s, each new nation quickly established its own national team. They were soon playing heated qualifying matches against each other – which were both violent and cathartic – but the hatred diminished with each passing match. When Serbia went to Zagreb to play Croatia in a World Cup qualifier, visiting fans were banned and that could be an indication of the future.

Some games are now considered so politically explosive that FIFA and UEFA have intervened to make sure the countries can never play each other. Azerbaijan and Armenia are kept separate during World Cup and European Championship draws, for example. Both countries remain at war since the late 1980s over the status of Nagorno-Karabakh, a pro-Armenian, unrecognised republic that Azerbaijan says is still their territory – and the issue over which Turkey closed its border with Armenia in 1993.

When Gibraltar was admitted into UEFA after a long legal battle, one proviso was that they would never be drawn in the same group as Spain, who still have claims over the peninsular. Most recently, UEFA and FIFA moved to ensure Russia and Ukraine – who are currently fighting a pro-Russian insurgency in the east of the country – can't play each other either.

After the Euro 2016 qualification match last year between Serbia and Albania (see page 84), teams with a fractious history are likely to be kept further apart in future. Perhaps UEFA and FIFA have taken a leaf out of Orwell's book.

"There are quite enough real causes of trouble already," he wrote. "We need not add to them by encouraging young men to kick each other on the shins amid the roars of infuriated spectators."

James Montague

▲ **Protection...police keep watch outside the Ataturk Stadium in Bursa**

Death of the centre-forward

The traditional number nine has been all but replaced by the goalscoring all-rounder, says Jonathan Wilson

Arsene Wenger's irritation at being asked again and again why he didn't sign a striker in the summer has been obvious, but his answer has rarely varied. He didn't sign a striker for the very simple reason that there wasn't one available.

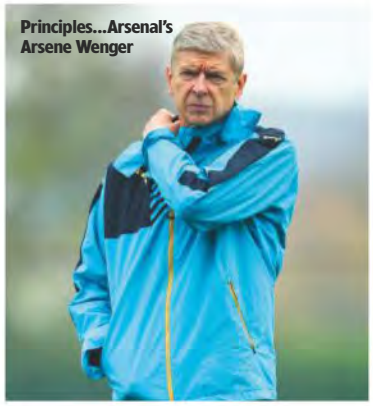
Or at least, there wasn't one available that he could guarantee would be better than Theo Walcott and Oliver Giroud, and who would fit in with his economic principles – which meant not splashing a potential £58million on a 19-year-old of unproven potential as Manchester United did when they signed Anthony Martial.

Who, after all, could Arsenal realistically have signed? Who could they have got in the £30-50m bracket who would have left whatever club they were with and be guaranteed to score 20 goals a season?

With hindsight, perhaps Wenger should have gone for Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, but nobody could have foreseen how he started this season in Thomas Tuchel's free-scoring Borussia Dortmund side.

It may be that the current dearth is a freak, and that over the next five years a vast numbers of gifted goalscorers will emerge, but this feels like a result of the way the game has evolved. Goalpoachers have all but vanished from the game at the highest level as strikers these days need to be multifaceted. They can't simply hang around the box, or drift off the shoulder of the last defender, or dart across the near post to finish off chances others have crafted for them. They must now also be capable of creating their own opportunities and, perhaps even more significantly, of linking the play.

The two greatest goalscorers of the age, Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi, are both converted creators: Ronaldo a winger, Messi a number 10 who spent much of his early career playing out wide. They score more goals than anybody else because they are better than everybody else, but goalscoring is only part of what they do – something that has perhaps affected the thinking about what a centre-forward should do.



Principles...Arsenal's Arsene Wenger

Finisher...Sergio Aguero scores his fifth goal in Manchester City's 6-1 victory over Newcastle United in October

> "When I arrived in 1996, in every club you had strikers – and I mean strikers: those who could head the ball. We have less now"
>
> **Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger**

The emergence of the false nine, the striker who occupies the centre-forward position but drops off to become a de facto number 10, creating space for wide men or runners from midfield, has redefined what it is to be a striker. And the success of that style of forward has had ramifications down the game.

There is, however, a certain irony in the fact that the best classical striker in the game at the moment, Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski, is prospering under a coach who, in his time at Barcelona, did most to refine the position out of existence: Pep Guardiola.

Lewandowski first made a name for himself in the Bundesliga at Dortmund, playing as a second striker behind Lucas Barrios. Although the Pole's physical strength, finishing and willingness to work across the front line gives him the appearance of an old-school number nine, there is something of Ian Rush about him in look, manner and style, but he has a wider range of skills than was traditional and can create if need be.

That, in a sense, makes him ideal for the Bayern system. Lewandowski's movement and touch are good enough to join in the rat-a-tat of passing that is characteristic of the Guardiola style. But he is also different enough to add a physical edge and has the sort of lethal finishing that both makes Bayern's build-up play even more dangerous than it is anyway, and means he might nick a goal from nothing to salvage a game that had been going against Bayern – not that there have been many of those this term.

It was his five goals in nine minutes for Bayern against Wolfsburg in September that made headlines, but the header he scored for Poland against the Republic of Ireland a couple of weeks later was more emblematic of what makes him so hard to play against – darting across his marker to

meet a cross with a ferocious powerful header that was proof of his ability to guide the ball goalwards at extreme force from almost anywhere in the box.

In a very different way, Lewandowski has done for Bayern what Diego Costa did for Chelsea last season and for Atletico Madrid before that. He is somebody who turns pressure into chances, picking up on the slightest sniff of a chance in the box while at the same time fitting into the general pattern of play.

In January, Wenger made the point that the best strikers all seem to come from South America, highlighting Costa, Sergio Aguero and Alexis Sanchez.

"If you look across Europe, where are the strikers from?" he asked. "You will see that many of them – at least 80 per cent – come from South America. So we have to question ourselves: what can we add to our academies to develop strikers again?

"If you look at the 60s, 70s in England, even when I arrived in 1996, in every club you had strikers – and I mean strikers: those who could head the ball. We have less now. In Germany they went to the World Cup with [Miroslav] Klose, who is 35.

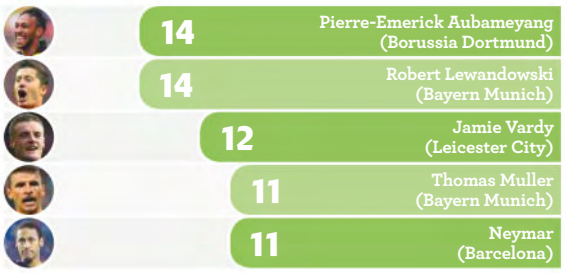
"Maybe in our history, street football has gone. In street football, when you are 10-years old you play with 15-year-olds, so you have to be shrewd, you have to show that you are good, you have to fight, win impossible balls. When it is all a bit more formulated then it is developing your individual skill, your fighting attitude less. We have lost a little bit of that in football."

Yet Sanchez and Aguero are not typical centre-forwards; they are finishers who can come from deep or wide. Sanchez, in particular, seems to need a left-sided starting berth, which he has with both Arsenal and Chile. That suggests it's not just about his street origins, but also an issue of shape.

Tactical evolution and developmental evolution seem to have created a world in which the striker is a rare breed. WS

Classic...Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski

THIS SEASON'S TOP GOALSCORERS IN EUROPE



(goals in top five European leagues, up to and including 19.11.15)

Facetoface

STILIYAN PETROV

"When I heard the diagnosis, I felt I was the loneliest person in the world"

The former Celtic, Aston Villa and Bulgaria midfielder talks about his fight to recover from cancer

In March 2012, Aston Villa lost 3-0 to Arsenal and you played the game with a high temperature. You didn't know at the time, but it was to be your last appearance in the Premier League. Soon afterwards you were diagnosed with leukaemia...
The worst moment in my life was when I heard the diagnosis. Then I felt like I was the loneliest person in the world. The leukaemia was aggressive and I had to begin medical treatment immediately. I felt the support of millions of people from throughout the football world. To hear applause for me in the 19th minute [he wore the number 19 shirt] was incredible. I had to fight three years. The first year was very difficult. The likelihood of beating the cancer is 50 to 50.

Who supported you during the treatment?
The support came from all over the football world. I was supported from millions of people, most of them unknown. While I was proud of this support, the biggest support I received was from my wife, Paulina. She was with me 24 hours a day. Her task was to help me survive. Our children were sent to the grandmothers and grandfathers. I was in hospital and for several weeks. I couldn't see my children – my sons Kristiyan and Stiliyan. They knew about my illness from the very first day. Sometimes they came to the hospital, but it gave me power to fight and to be a husband and father. At that time I valued the important things in my life, even the smallest details. I valued what I could lose and made everything possible to survive. My life was day by day. I had three to four chemotherapy treatments every day and took different pills. But I was sure, that I would recover.

What was this medical treatment?
I went through three very heavy years of chemotherapy, with steroid treatment. Because of the steroids I put on 39kg. At the moment I am trying to get back to my old weight, but it's difficult because I am still under the influence of steroids.

How did you feel when you came back to Bulgaria after more than three years?
I have no words to describe what I felt because, when I was told of the leukaemia diagnosis, I didn't know if I would have a chance to go back to my country again. When I heard the diagnosis, my wife began to cry and both doctors stared at the ground. I had to take a very quick decision because they told me that the leukaemia was aggressive and it was necessary to immediately begin medical treatment. I have to thank Professor David Linch from University Hospital in London and all the medical staff there. I have to thank also Professor Charlie Craddock, Sandeep Nagra and the staff in the University Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

Which is the main difference between English and Scottish football?
In Scotland I played for a side who were dominant in the league. Most of the other teams played defensive against us. In England it was totally different. Most of the teams are of an equal standard and everybody can beat everybody. The football in the Premier League is quicker, with players in excellent physical condition, and you have to be well prepared tactically. Also, in England almost every mistake gets punished.

The image of Celtic in Scotland is different than the image of Aston Villa in England...
Yes, the people expect Celtic to be champions every year and to play in the Champions League. But at Aston Villa, the fans, maybe, have a different kind of idea. They know that in the Premier League you need to have a lot of money to build a strong team to challenge the likes of Chelsea, Manchester United and Manchester City.

Which derby is more emotional: Celtic-Rangers or Liverpool-Manchester United?
Celtic–Rangers is more emotional because of the religion. The atmosphere is more stressed and the fans are more aggressive.

But now there is no derby between Celtic and Rangers...
Unfortunately that's the truth. And this is the biggest problem for Celtic. If Rangers don't return to the first division, it wouldn't be good for Celtic, because without a real rivalry the team will be champions of Scotland, but they won't be strong enough to compete in Europe.

You have started a charitable foundation with your wife. What do you want to achieve with it?
I would never wish on anybody what has happened to me. That is why my wife and I founded a foundation. We decided to search for a cure for the cancer, as an alternative of chemotherapy. We have ambitions to help the oncological hospitals in Bulgaria. Our foundation also supports families of children with cancer.

How do you see your future?
I have a lot of plans. I'm studying for my coaching badges and last season I was a coach for Tim Sherwood at Aston Villa. I really don't know what will happen next. There was some talk about me helping to support Bulgarian football, but I am still undecided.

Interview *by Rumen Paytashev*

"I'm studying for my coaching badges and last season I was a coach for Tim Sherwood at Aston Villa"

TOMORROW'S STARS TODAY

Talentscout

[AFRO-EUROPEANS]

WORDS: Nick Bidwell

Leroy SANE

Midfielder, 19 (11.01.96), Schalke & Germany

In a sentence
An attacking midfield virtuoso who has taken German football by storm this year and was so electrifying that *Nationalmanschaft* coach Joachim Low handed him his first full cap in November's friendly against France.

What they say
Schalke coach Andre Breitenreiter: "Even when he's not having a good day, and not especially on the radar, he has the ability to decide a game at any time. A remarkable young player."

Pep Guardiola: "He's a great talent. Congratulations, Germany."

Joachim Low: "His performances this year have been very impressive. I like the way he goes about his business. He's very clever at moving into space, he's incredibly quick, has the vision to create and scores a lot of goals himself. I see huge potential in him."

The story so far
The son of Regina Weber, an ex-German rhythmic gymnastic champion, and former Senegalese international striker Souleyman Sane, he was born and raised in the Ruhr region of western Germany, playing in the schoolboy and junior ranks of Wattenscheid, Bayer Leverkusen and Schalke. He made his first-team debut for the latter towards the end of the 2013-14 season and within a year was hitting the high notes in the Champions League, curling in a superb goal in a 4-3 loss to Real Madrid last spring. Has a French passport – courtesy of his father growing up in Paris – but has always represented Germany, featuring for the under-19s, under-21s and now the seniors.

Potential...catching the eye in the Europa League against Asteras Tripolis

Debut...playing for Germany against France in November

"I like the way he goes about his business...I see huge potential in him"
Germany coach Joachim Low

3 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT SANE

- His gymnast mother won a bronze medal at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.
- He made the wrong sort of headlines in November 2014 when spectacularly crashing his top-of-the range Mercedes.
- Elder brother Kim plays for Nuremberg reserves, while younger sibling Sidi is with Schalke's under-13s.

The next step
Despite the fact that he has played only 30-odd competitive games for Schalke, some of Europe's biggest clubs are already making tracks to his door, with Liverpool and Manchester United thought to be leading the charge. He is under contract at Schalke until June 2019 and his agent, Jurgen Milewski, has ruled out any immediate move.

Strengths
A clear and present threat on either flank, his main assets are his dribbling skills, his effectiveness in one-on-ones, his speed and explosive qualities, and his excellent shooting. With a fine left foot, he also possesses great balance and is tremendously elusive.

Weaknesses
Understandably for an exuberant teenager, his decision making can let him down at times. He also has a tendency to overdo the solo runs.

Kamohelo MOKOTJO

Midfielder, 24 (11.03.91), Twente (Hol) & South Africa
The defensive midfielder might not be first choice for his country but he is highly thought of in his adopted Holland. A hard runner, strong tackler, accurate passer and comfortable in possession, he is very good at dictating the tempo of a game.

Anwar EL GHAZI

Winger, 20 (03.05.95), Ajax & Holland
Now in his second season as an Ajax first-teamer, the Dutch-born right-winger of Moroccan descent possesses pace, dribbling skills, mobility and clinical finishing – although he could do with a bit more altruism and heads-up awareness. He made his Holland debut in a Euro 2016 qualifier against Kazakhstan in October.

Assane DIOUSSE

Midfielder, 18 (20.09.97), Empoli (Ita) & Senegal
The deepest man in the engine-room diamond favoured by Empoli coach Marco Giampaolo, the unflappable teen has proved one of the Tuscan side's most dependable performers of late. The rookie from Senegal has been an Italian resident for five years.

Said BENRAHMA

Striker, 20 (10.08.95), Nice (Fra) & Algeria
Nice's impact sub has been creating quite a buzz with his ability to wrong-foot defenders and manipulate the ball with finesse or power. Two years ago, while playing for part-timers Colomiers, the slimly built North African had no fewer than 16 professional clubs interested in him. Hampered by injury problems, he is at long last fit and firing, deservedly making his senior debut for Algeria in a friendly against Senegal in October.

N'Golo KANTE

Midfielder, 24 (29.03.91), Leicester City & France
The diminutive Franco-Malian has been arguably the most effective midfield enforcer in the Premier League this season with surprise early leaders Leicester City. Unwanted by academies in his hometown Paris as a junior, he signed an amateur contract with Boulogne, then in the second division, where he went from strength to strength, eventually earning a move to Caen before signing for Leicester last summer. Reserved off the pitch, he is a man possessed on matchdays as a dynamic and relentless ball hunter.

Wahbi KHAZRI

Midfielder, 24 (08.02.91), Bordeaux (Fra) & Tunisia
The Tunisian international has lit up Bordeaux this term with his silky skills. However, he can lapse into overconfidence: as when he clipped a "Panenka" penalty straight at the Nantes keeper – to the fury of coach Willy Sagnol.

Sofiane BOUFAL

Midfielder, 22 (17.09.93), Lille & France
Signed from Angers in January for €4million, the pocket-sized Franco-Moroccan playmaker is now thought to be worth at least five times as much. A wonderful dribbler who is able to pull off outrageous tricks, the Parisian can, however, lose his cool. He was sent off against Bastia in November and has twice clashed with team-mates this term. After initially appearing keen to play for Morocco, he has had second thoughts and is now targetting a place in the French squad.

World Soccer vintage 25 years ago

December 1990

World Cup-winner Matthaus is the main man

West Germany's World Cup winning-captain Lothar Matthaus was on the cover after finishing top in our poll for World Player of the Year. In a clean sweep for the world champions, West Germany won the Team of the Year award and their coach, Franz Beckenbauer, was voted Manager of the Year.

"Italia 90", as it was to become known, was a tournament remembered as much for the operatic voices of the "Three Tenors" – Pavarotti, Domingo and Carreras – as for the football of Schillaci, Gascoigne and Matthaus.

Sue Mott wrote of the West German skipper: "Mention of the 1990 World Cup will forever conjure visions of Gazza howling to that tune from *Turandot*.

"But in reality, the Italian extravaganza was hijacked by the Wagnerian brigade, led by the tough and telling West German captain, Lothar Matthaus. Legs by Michelangelo, wealth thanks to £500,000 a year from a grateful Internazionale.

"For 29-year-old Bavarian Matthaus, laying hands on the golden trophy represented the pinnacle of a career that began in less than glorious circumstances with his training as a home-furnishings fitter – just in case. But Lothar Herbert Matthaus has not been required to upholster too many armchairs on his way to sporting immortality."

Matthaus had been the dominant player throughout the tournament, running the German midfield and scoring four goals in the process, including two in an impressive 4-1 group win against Yugoslavia.

Recalling his second goal in that match, Mott commented: "He might have sauntered out to the wing, but the destroyer-turned-playmaker surged forward, high-hurdled a tackle and finished with a shot that inspired many a Pavarotti-accompanied action replay. In terms of soccer stardom, he had arrived.

"'The World Cup was proof I have progressed,' Matthaus said after the Final. 'In my first Final in 1986 I played to control Maradona. This time, I was the leader of the Germans. That is my four-year advance. I am good for the coaches because I can play anywhere in the middle.'"

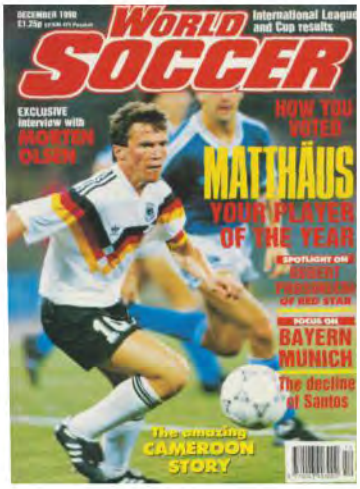
Mott continued: "In [the Final], a pair of new boots sabotaged his moment of glory. Reports at the time suggested Matthaus refused to take the 84th-minute penalty against Argentina due to an ankle injury. The truth was more mundane.

"'I split a boot in the first half and had to change to new ones for the second,' he said. 'It would not have been good for me psychologically to take the penalty, so [Andreas] Brehme was given the job.'

"If his legs can stand the pace, Matthaus might overtake Beckenbauer's record 103 caps for West Germany.

"He can contemplate retirement, but only from a safe distance. The day when he moves into Kitzbuhl, in a luxury apartment with the Beckenbauers as near neighbours, as yet holds no allure." WS

Award...Lothar Matthaus was our player of the year



FOUR

WORLD TEAM OF THE YEAR

1 WEST GERMANY	28.4
2 MILAN	17.6
3 CAMEROON	9.6
4 Italy	5.2
5 Liverpool	4.8
6 Englahd	4.4
7 Internazionale	4.0
8 Marseille	3.6
9 Napoli	3.2
10 Faroe Islands	2.8
11 Juventus	2.4
12 Vasco da Gama	2.0
13 Argentina	1.6
14 Olimpia	1.4
15 Ajax Amsterdam	1.2
16 Atletico Nacional	1.0
17 Real Madrid	0.9
18 Crvena Zvezda (Red Star Belgrade)	0.8
19 Republic of Ireland	0.7
20 Sampdoria	0.5

Other confirmed nominations: Anderlecht, Arsenal, Aston Villa, Bayern Munich, Boca Juniors, Costa Rica, IFK Gothenburg, Lausanne, FC Porto, Roma.

WEST GERMANY went out in glory – winning the World Cup for the third time a matter of months before unification with the East rang down the curtain on an historic era in the German game.

No country can boast a record to match West Germany: three times World Cup-winners, twice runners-up, once placed third and once placed fourth. Never once did they fail to qualify for the finals and only on one occasion were they beaten in 37 years of preliminaries – at home by Portugal in the 1986 qualifiers.

At Italia'90, West Germany were far and away the best team on view. As the finals progressed, so fatigue began to take its toll. The Germans were criticised widely for not outplaying and outscoring a weakened Argentina in runaway style in the Final.

But the Germans won 1-0 with an Andy Brehme penalty – and, faced by a despondently ruthless Argentine team – what more could have been expected of them?

Having appeared in all three World Cup Finals in the past eight years, West Germany might be considered the team of the decade.

For now, World Team of the Year must suffice.

PREVIOUS AWARD WINNERS

PLAYERS

1982	
1 Paolo Rossi (Juventus and Italy)	23
2 Karl-Heinz Rummenigge (Bayern M and W. Germany)	14
3 Paolo Roberto Falcao (Roma and Brazil)	12
1983	
1 Zico (Udinese and Brazil)	29
2 Michel Platini (Juventus and France)	24
3 Paolo Roberto Falcao (Roma and Brazil)	18
1984	
1 Michel Platini (Juventus and France)	54
2 Ian Rush (Liverpool and Wales)	9
3 Zico (Udinese and Brazil)	7
1985	
1 Michel Platini (Juventus and France)	20.6
2 Preben Elkjaer (Verona and Denmark)	11.2
3 Diego Maradona (Napoli and Argentina)	7
1986	
1 Diego Maradona (Napoli and Argentina)	35.8
2 Igor Belanov (Kiev Dynamo and Sov. Union)	6.7
3 Gary Lineker (Barcelona and England)	5.7
1987	
1 Ruud Gullit (Milan and Holland)	38.5
2 Diego Maradona (Napoli and Argentina)	13.1
3 Marco Van Basten (Milan and Holland)	8.8
1988	
1 Marco Van Basten (Milan and Holland)	43
2 Ruud Gullit (Milan and Holland)	21
3 Frank Rijkaard (Milan and Holland)	7
1989	
1 Ruud Gullit (Milan and Holland)	24
2 Marco Van Basten (Milan and Holland)	18
3 Bebeto (Flamengo Vasco and Brazil)	10

MANAGERS

1982	
1 Enzo Bearzot (Italy)	49
2 Tele Santana (Brazil)	18
3 Michel Hidalgo (France)	7
1983	
1 Sepp Piontek (Denmark)	29
2 Ernst Happel (Hamburg)	27
3 Nils Liedholm (Roma)	10
1984	
1 Michel Hidalgo (France)	30
2 Joe Fagan (Liverpool)	15
3 Sep Piontek (Denmark)	8
1985	
1 Terry Venables (Barcelona)	29.8
2 Howard Kendall (Everton)	28.6
3 Giovanni Trapattoni (Juventus)	5.3
1986	
1 Guy Thys (Belgium)	15.4
2 Valeri Lobanovsky (Kiev Dynamo and Sov. Union)	14.7
3 Kenny Dalglish (Liverpool)	14.4
1987	
1 Johan Cruyff (Ajax Amsterdam)	24.6
2 Udo Lattek (Koln)	17.6
3 Leo Beenhakker (Real Madrid)	16.5
1988	
1 Rinus Michels (Holland/Bayer Leverkusen)	48
2 Jack Charlton (Rep. Ireland)	13
3 Arrigo Sacchi (Milan)	6
1989	
1 Arrigo Sacchi (Milan)	42
2 Sebastiao Lazaroni (Brazil)	25
3 George Graham (Arsenal)	8

TEAMS

1982	
1 Brazil	30
2 Italy	25
3 Flamengo (Brz)	20
1983	
1 Hamburg	29
2 Aberdeen	15
3 Denmark	11
1984	
1 France	45
2 Liverpool	19
3 Juventus	6
1985	
1 Everton	42.3
2 Juventus	8.8
3 Verona	7.4
1986	
1 Argentina	14.59
2 Kiev Dynamo	14.55
3 Denmark	8.6
1987	
1 FC Porto	37.2
2 Ajax Amsterdam	18.5
3 Real Madrid	16.4
1988	
1 Holland	43
2 PSV Eindhoven	13
3 Liverpool	10
1989	
1 Milan	51
2 Brazil	23
3 Arsenal	7

● 1988, Marco Van Basten ● 1985-86, Michel Platini ● 1983, Zico ● 1982, Paolo Rossi

By SUE MOTT

MENTION of the 1990 World Cup will for ever conjure visions of Gazza howling to that tune from Turandot. Tears by the Kleenex Kid; music by Puccini.

But, in reality, the Italian extravaganza was hijacked by the Wagnerian brigade, led by the tough and telling West German captain, Lothar Matthaus. Legs by Michelangelo; wealth thanks to £500,000 a year from a grateful Internazionale.

For 29-year-old Bavarian Matthaus, laying hands on the golden trophy represented the pinnacle of a career that began in less than glorious circumstances with his training as a home furnishings fitter ... just in case. But Lothar Herbert Matthaus has not been required to upholster too many armchairs on his way to sporting immortality.

The claims of other World Cup heroes such as Klinsmann, Brehme, Milla and Schillaci jostled for attention, but Matthaus edged away from the illustrious crowd the moment his second spectacular goal against Yugoslavia in the first round of the World Cup finals hit the net.

He might have sauntered out to the wing but the destroyer-turned-playmaker surged forward, high-hurdled a tackle, and finished with a shot that inspired many a Pavarotti-accompanied action replay. In terms of soccer stardom, he had arrived.

"I cannot say that winning the World Cup was the greatest moment in my life because I have a wife and family they come before sport," said Matthaus. "Football is my hobby.

"But the World Cup was proof I have progressed. In my first final in 1986 I played to control Maradona. This time, I was the leader of the Germans. That is my four-year advance. I am good for the team coaches because I can play anywhere in the middle, although my favourite position is just behind the strikers."

This has been a matter of evolution. Young Matthaus, when he could be persuaded out of the bierkeller, was valued for his containment skills rather than sweeping attacks. A bomb

> **"In my first Final, in 1986, I played to control Maradona. This time, I was the leader of the Germans. That is my four-year advance"**
>
> Germany's 1990 World Cup-winning captain, Lothar Matthaus

Left: Matthaus with Sylvia and their children, Alisa and Viola.
Above: With Trappattoni and Brehme.

ARMCHAIR RIDER

No. 1 Matthaus is sitting pretty

disposal expert rather than the dynamite.

In 1982 he played in the West German team on tour in South America and was awarded the exacting role of marking both Maradona and Zico. At the age of 21 this could be considered precocious.

He was simultaneously acquiring a reputation for waywardness, driving £15,000-worth of new Mercedes into garden fences while under the influence of cocktails and youthful exuberance.

"I was not good. But it's normal for young men to drink beer and whisky. I had to learn. After that crash, I didn't drink and drive again. Now I must concentrate on my work.

The night before matches I might have one beer with dinner and only after the match will I drink three. Or four."

Rebellion over and happily married to childhood sweetheart Sylvia, Matthaus has enjoyed some success at his hobby. Since winning his first cap against Holland in the 1980 European Championships he has progressed from being a disputatious non-leaguer with F.C. Hezogenaurach into a dominant force for Internazionale, where he plays with fellow-German lire-mongers Brehme and Klinsmann.

Along the way he played with Borussia Monchengladbach before moving in 1984 to Bayern Munich, where he won three Bundesliga titles and the German Cup. The transfer to Italy in 1988 reflected his new incarnation as the thoroughly modern footballer.

"Lothar is the universal player," said his club manager, Giovanni Trapattoni. "He is the complete modern footballer.

"He has the character of a winner, he has good technique and he was simply the best in the World Cup. He is very important to us.

"I knew him when he was young and he was very immature in mind and behaviour, but after he came to Milan he had a transformation. His mind is now quiet and mature."

Which is just as well given the Milanese rapture that greets him everywhere he goes in his adopted city. "Italy is a different culture," said Klinsmann. "They talk and talk and talk about football without any end.

"It's not possible for Lothar to walk down the street. They recognise him in a second. They want to touch him. Sometimes it is difficult to accept that they treat football as life and death."

But Matthaus has adapted. His ties are Italian silk, his diet is Italian pasta (supplied on the road by Inter's travelling chef) and his ambition is to supplement the Italian title won in 1989. In a career spanning ten glorious years he has never won a single European trophy.

His World Cup record makes up this omission slightly, but in both finals Matthaus has been less than fortunate. In 1986, while guarding Maradona, he was forced to play with a broken wrist disguised by a flesh-coloured bandage.

"Football is my work. When you have a chance to play in the World Cup final, I don't care if you have two broken hands or two broken legs, you still play. I play for Germany with my heart."

In Rome, a pair of new boots sabotaged his moment of glory. Reports at the time suggested that Matthaus refused to take the 84th-minute penalty against Argentina due to an ankle injury. The truth was more mundane.

"I split a boot in the first half and had to change to new ones for the second. It would not have been good for me psychologically to take the penalty, so Brehme was given the job. I did not wish it was me. I am a non-egotist."

But the non-egotist can be roused by suggestions that West Germany, circa 1990, bear little comparison in terms of shining star quality with WG'74, Beckenbauer, Breitner and Mueller, or even the Rahn-inspired boys of '54 who beat Hungary in the final. The Hungary of Puskas, Kocsis and Hidegkuti.

Improved

"I am another player, a different type," said Matthaus hotly. "Twenty years ago, football was very different. It went slowly. There was time to stop the ball, look and play. Now you look and shoot all in one moment.

"But I still see big stars today. I see Gascoigne, Schillaci, Baresi, Maradona. To me Maradona is still the greatest player in the world.

"And England, as a team, have improved. Ten years ago it was all kick and rush. Now England teams play very well. They have technique.

"Gascoigne – what do you call him? Gazza? – is crazy. But in a positive way. He is good for football. Players like him are an inspiration for young people in the street."

Whether Beckenbauer, friend and mentor to Matthaus, was inspiration to the latest German captain is a moot point.

Silky elegance is hardly a hallmark. Aggression, speed and muscular endeavour have replaced Beckenbauer's urbanity. But in the general frenzy of European football it could hardly be otherwise.

If his legs can stand the pace, and rumours abound of a hampering injury, Matthaus might possibly succeed in his ambition to overtake Beckenbauer's record 103 caps for West Germany. Matthaus is 20 short.

"Everyone expects us to be the favourite in the next World Cup," he says. "But history shows that big teams have problems with little teams. Look at Cameroon and Argentina, England and Egypt."

Matthaus can contemplate retirement, but only from a safe distance. They day when he moves into Kitzbuhl, in a luxury apartment with the Beckenbauers as near neighbours, as yet holds no allure.

As Klinsmann says: "Whatever he says about football just being a hobby, Lothar simply lives for the game."

The moment of triumph for West German skipper, Matthaus, the teenage armchair upholsterer who became a World Cup collector.

Also in this issue...

p6 Graham Turner reported on the sacking of John Toshack at Real Madrid, saying: "It was well past eight o'clock in the evening when club president Ramon Mendoza walked into the press room at the Bernabeu stadium and announced that the 18 members of the Real Madrid board had, after two hours of debate, decided unanimously to sack John Toshack. Most of the two hours, however, had not been dedicated to the foregone conclusion of Tosh's departure, but to who was going to replace him."

p18-19 Keir Radnedge, profiling Yugoslavia's Robert Prosinecki, acknowledged: "If [Gheorghe] Hagi is the 'Maradona of the Carpathians', then Prosinecki is the 'Maradona of the Balkans.' He is – and not only in my opinion – the finest young player on the continent."

p26-27 Eric Cantona, who would soon bring his own brand of skill, petulance and language to England, was quoted as saying: "Football does not accept those who are different, and that disappoints me. Players are so boring. They are robots who are not supposed to think for themselves."

p28-29 Writing about Pele's old club, Brian Homewood said: "Prepare for one of the saddest stories in football – the decline of Santos Football Club." The twice World Club champions were "barely able to pay salaries on time and had difficulties providing shirts."

10 years ago

Monterrey had three players sent off in the second leg of the Mexican apertura Final against Toluca. After the first leg finished 3-3, Serafin and Gonzalez both saw red with the score 0-0 in the second leg. Perez then followed and Toluca won 3-0 for a 6-3 aggregate victory.

20 years ago

Louis Van Gaal's European champions Ajax drew 0-0 with the Libertadores Cup champions, Gremio, who were coached by Luis Felipe Scolari, in the Club World Cup Final before winning the penalty shoot-out. Danny Blind scored the winning spot-kick.

30 years ago

Real Madrid produced their biggest comeback in European competition. Trailing 5-1 to Borussia Monchengladbach after the away leg of their UEFA Cup third round tie in Germany, the holders won the return 4-0 at home to go through on away goals.

40 years ago

Wales were celebrating finishing top of their European Championship qualifying group. After losing their first match they proceeded to win the next five to earn a two-legged quarter-final against Yugoslavia, which would be played the following April and May.

50 years ago

After sacking English manager Denis Neville, the Dutch FA appointed a German, Georg Kessler, to take charge of the national team. Kessler, had been an assistant to German coach Sepp Herberger and worked with Holland's youth team for a year.

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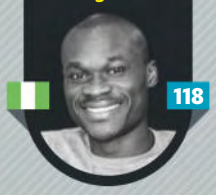

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BELGIUM

An exciting generation of Red Devils has the talent to go far in France

OVERVIEW

Les Diables Rouges (the red devils) are FIFA's top-ranked side and will be taking part in the European Championship for the first time since co-hosting with Holland in 2000.

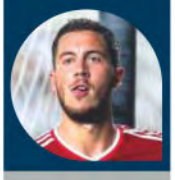
- Belgium sealed top spot in their qualifying group with a win over Israel in Brussels and moved to the top of the FIFA world rankings for the first time.
- They were not entirely convincing in the qualifying campaign, losing in Cardiff to Wales and benefitting from Bosnia-Herzegovina's collapse in form.
- The team is still built around the figures who were crucial to the team that reached the last 16 of the 2014 World Cup: Vincent Kompany, Eden Hazard, Axel Witsel and Kevin De Bruyne. Over the past year, a number of youngsters have forced themselves into contention: Thorgan Hazard, Youre Tielemans, Michy Batshuayi. However, only Italy-based midfielder Radja Nainggolan has broken into the team.
- Coach Marc Wilmots has also given a chance to players from the domestic league, such as Gent's Laurent Depoitre.

Secured...Belgium beat Andorra to qualify

TACTICS

Wilmots has had doubts over Marouane Fellaini in a creative role, so De Bruyne has moved back into a central midfield position. Romelu Lukaku and Christian Benteke vie for the lone striker role – although Lukaku has struggled to score for Belgium, despite starring for Everton this term.

STAR MAN



Eden HAZARD

Belgium's number 10 has been struggling for form with Chelsea this season but he remains a mercurial talent.

COACH

Marc WILMOTS

Outspoken ex-striker who is popular with his players. Has recently been linked with a move to his former club Schalke.

PLAYER PROFILE

Midfield pivot...Axel Witsel

AXEL WITSEL

No matter that certain prominent members of the Belgian press pack have been expressing reservations of late about the Russian-based central midfielder's overall contribution – accusing him of only passing the ball square and generally playing at a snail's pace – what counts is the opinion of straight-talking national coach Marc Wilmots, and he very much is an admirer of the 26-year-old Zenit St Petersburg midfield controller.

"He's our brains," declared Wilmots in an interview with the Sudpresse media group. "He gives stability in the middle of the park. As far as football intelligence is concerned, he's the best I've seen. That's why I've given him the keys."

A full international since the spring of 2008, the Liege-born number six, is arguably paying the price for the rather unglamorous role he occupies in Belgium's 4-2-3-1 formation. The long and short of his job description is to set the strategic tone and not to give the ball away – and in this regard he rarely disappoints, laying the foundations for creative whizz-kids Eden Hazard and Kevin De Bruyne to flourish.

Named after Axel Foley, the Eddie Murphy character in the *Beverley Hills Cop* movies, he might not be a Hollywood player, but always learns his lines.

Nick Bidwell

ITALY

Unbeaten *Azzurri* make solid but unspectacular progress

OVERVIEW

Italy extended their unbeaten run in qualifying to 50 games as they qualified comfortably for next summer in France.

- Italy qualified comfortably for Euro 2016, winning seven games and drawing three, but did not set the world alight. 1-0 home wins over Malta and Bulgaria, and a victory in Azerbaijan, took them over the finishing line.
- A 2-1 win over Norway in their final game extended the *Azzurri*'s unbeaten run in qualifying to 50 matches, stretching back to 2006.
- Caps for Franco Vazquez and Eder reignited the debate about foreign-born "*oriundi*" and says a lot about the paucity of Italian talent. Andrea Pirlo, 36 and playing in Major League Soccer, is still a contender, as is Toronto forward Giovinco.
- Coach Antonio Conte has endured poor relations with former club Juventus, with fans blaming him for players such as Claudio Marchisio returning injured from Italy duty. But the Juve defensive trio of Gianluigi Buffon, Leonardo Bonucci and Giorgio Chiellini remain crucial.

France-bound...Italy celebrate qualification

TACTICS

Like Conte the player, Italy play an aggressive pressing game, but they can fade after an hour. Graziano Pelle and Eder have been the preferred big man/little man partnership of late, with Antonio Candreva and Alessandro Florenzi on the flanks. Can switch to 3-5-2 with an extra centre-back.

STAR MAN

Gianluigi BUFFON

Keeper, captain and record cap-holder (154 and counting) who wants to emulate Dino Zoff and play at a World Cup aged 40.

COACH

Antonio CONTE

Former Juventus midfielder and title-winning coach who succeeded Cesare Prandelli last summer.

PLAYER PROFILE

Joker in the pack...Alessandro Florenzi

ALESSANDRO FLORENZI

After scoring Roma's second goal in a 2-0 home win against Cagliari in the autumn of 2014, goalscorer Florenzi took everyone by surprise. He ran over to one corner of the pitch, jumped the reinforced plastic stadium fence and ran up into the grandstand to find his granny.

He knew exactly where she was sitting and ran over to her to give her a big hug, much to the delight of 50,000 fans in the Olimpico. To some extent the incident says much about the 24-year-old – the clean living boy from next door, much attached to his family and to his club.

Perhaps little known to fans outside Italy, he will get a chance to put that right next summer at the Euro 2016 finals in France. The point is that, both for Roma coach Rudi Garcia and for Italy coach Antonio Conte, Florenzi is the Joker in the pack, seemingly equally at ease at right back, on the right side of midfield or indeed as a right winger in attack.

His pace, his ball skills, his versatility and knack for scoring spectacular goals would all suggest that not only will Florenzi be in the Italy squad in France, he could also attract the attention of other clubs. Italian media speculation has suggested that Barcelona were ready to spend €40million on Florenzi next season.

Paddy Agnew

SPAIN

Evolution not revolution for the reigning Euro champions

OVERVIEW

After their disastrous World Cup campaign in Brazil, coach Vicente Del Bosque introduced some new faces, but many of the old guard remain.

Spain's first-round exit from the 2014 World Cup in Brazil offered coach Vicente Del Bosque a chance to rebuild. Some new faces were introduced – Paco Alcacer, Thiago Alcantara, Marc Bartra, Dani Carvajal – but lots of familiar faces remain: Iker Casillas, Andres Iniesta, David Silva and Sergio Ramos. However, Spain no longer have the "X factor" as Xabi Alonso and Xavi both retired after the World Cup.

The Euro 2012 winners suffered a hiccup in qualifying for Euro 2016, losing away to Slovakia, their first qualifying defeat in eight years. That suggested their World Cup hangover might last longer than expected, but they then won nine of the 10 qualifiers to finish top of their group.

Del Bosque will have difficulty finding space for all his midfielders in his finals squad but he is less well endowed in defence, where Gerard Pique has been booed by pro-Real Madrid fans.

Another win...Spain beat Ukraine in Kiev

TACTICS

Del Bosque continues to enjoy an embarrassment of midfield riches, with Fabregas, Silva, Iniesta, Mata, Isco, Pedro, Koke and fit-again Thiago all in contention for starting roles. He appears reluctant to ditch Iker Casillas despite a strong case for rival keeper David De Gea.

STAR MAN

David SILVA

Manchester City's attacking wizard excelled in a central role during the qualifying campaign.

COACH

Vicente DEL BOSQUE

Veteran coach who oversaw victories at the 2010 World Cup and Euro 2012. Will stand down after the summer's finals.

PLAYER PROFILE

Top scorer...Paco Alcacer

PACO ALCACER

With Diego Costa still struggling to find his bearings in the international arena, and Juventus striker Alvaro Morata frequently on his Italian club's substitute bench, it looks increasingly as though the task of leading Spain's front line in France will fall to the 22-year-old Valencia forward.

Present and correct in eight of his side's 10 Euro 2016 qualifiers, and their top scorer in Group C with five goals, Alcacer's mobility, excellent technique and quicksilver qualities makes him the perfect fit for Spain's possession-based short-passing game. And if anyone symbolises the new generation of Iberian talent, it is the former European under 19 champion of 2011 and 2012.

Of all the front-running options open to *Roja* coach, Vicente del Bosque, the *Valenciano* youngster seems by far the most capable of filling the void left by the international retirement in 2014 of the brilliant David Villa. Like the latter, his great strength is his all-round game: the good work in the channels and when coming deep; the ability to create space for runners; the need to be involved; the sharpness in the box.

Hailing from the town of Torrent, close to Valencia, he will be aiming to rain *Eurocopa* goals next summer.

Nick Bidwell

WALES

Triumph from tragedy for Bale's brothers

OVERVIEW

Four years on from the death of manager Gary Speed, and inspired by Real Madrid superstar Gareth Bale, the Welsh qualified for their first major tournament since the 1958 World Cup.

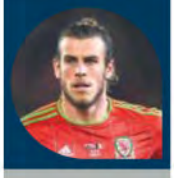
- Four years ago, Chris Coleman became Wales manager in tragic circumstances following the death of Gary Speed and has succeeded in fostering a club mentality among the players. "We are like brothers on the pitch," Gareth Bale said as fans in Cardiff celebrated a win in the final qualifying match against Andorra.
- Bale heads a group of players who first played together at youth and under-21 level and were given their senior debuts by John Toshack. The Real Madrid forward was top scorer in qualifying with seven goals, including a late winner against Andorra in the opening match of the campaign and the only goal of a 1-0 home win over Belgium.
- Wales, despite calling upon the likes of Ian Rush, Ryan Giggs and Mark Hughes, have never previously qualified for the European Championship.

On course...Wales beat Andorra to clinch qualification

TACTICS

A three-man defence has given Coleman the chance to pack midfield with willing runners and wing-backs. That has provided the base to allow Bale the freedom to roam behind a big target man, usually Hal Robson-Kanu. Aaron Ramsey is a valuable source of goals from midfield.

STAR MAN



Gareth BALE

The world's most expensive player and a genuine superstar, he was Wales' top scorer in qualifying with seven goals.

COACH

Chris COLEMAN

Former Fulham boss and national team defender (32 caps) who was appointed following the death of Gary Speed in 2011.

PLAYER PROFILE

Defensive cornerstone...Ashley Williams

ASHLEY WILLIAMS

Gareth Bale, Wales's lone international superstar, will be the centre of attention over the coming months, but Wales are far more than a one-man band.

Arsenal midfielder Aaron Ramsey has scored spectacular goals in the Champions League, while captain and central defender Ashley Williams has arguably been just as crucial to recent Welsh success.

"Ash has been magnificent," says manager Chris Coleman of the man who marshalled a defence that kept seven clean sheets in qualifying.

"To be a good captain you do not have to use your voice all the time, you can lead through your play. But he does both."

Williams signed a new contract with Swansea City last summer and remains committed to the club he joined eight years ago. Now 31, he has played in all four English league divisions for Stockport County and Swansea, as well as for non-league Hednesford Town, after being released by West Brom aged 16.

"He could play for any club in the Premier League," Coleman says. "Certain players get overlooked. I see some teams signing centre-backs for a lot of money and I think 'how has that happened?'"

It will be hard to overlook Williams next summer.

John Holmesdale

Preview

FIFA Club World Cup 2015

- Club America (Mexico)
- River Plate (Argentina)
- Barcelona (Spain)
- Guangzhou Evergrande (China)
- TP Mazembe (DR Congo)
- Aukland City (New Zealand)
- Sanfrecce Hiroshima or
- Gamba Osaka (Japan, hosts)

10-20 Dec, Japan

Fixtures

5TH-PLACE	HOST v AUKLAND CITY	
6TH-PLACE		LOSER QF 1 v LOSER QF 2
Q-F	HOST/AUCKLAND v TP MAZEMBE	AMERICA v GUANGZHOU E'G
SEMI-FINALS	WINNER QF 1 v RIVER PLATE	WINNER QF2 v BARCELONA
FINAL	WINNER SF 1 v WINNER SF 2	
3RD-PLACE	LOSER SF 1 v LOSER SF 2	

CLUB AMERICA (Mex)

Martin Del Palacio Langer

THE STORY SO FAR

America are arguably the biggest team in Mexico. They have won the most titles (12) since the advent of professionalism in the country in 1943 and, according to recent surveys, they have surpassed arch-rivals Guadalajara as the best supported side in the league. They are owned by media-giants Televisa and have traditionally been associated with the country's elites, although nowadays their fanbase spans every strata of Mexican society. Their last title was the 2014 Apertura, which allowed them to participate in the 2014-2015 CONCACAF Champions League, which they subsequently won, to reach the Club World Cup.

HOW THEY QUALIFIED FOR JAPAN

America beat MLS side Montreal Impact 5-3 on aggregate in the Final of the CONCACAF Champions League, but had to come back from being a goal down at half-time in the return leg after salvaging a late 1-1 draw in Mexico City. Three goals in 17 minutes gave them a 4-2 victory in Canada and the ticket to Tokyo. On their way to the Final, *Las Aguilas* ("the eagles") finished top of a group with Comunicaciones of Guatemala and Puerto Rico's Bayamon, before eliminating Costa Rican sides Saprissa and Herediano.

COACH

A Mexico international who played at USA 94, Ignacio Ambriz is the most advanced student of former national coach Javier Aguirre, to whom he was assistant in Spain with Osasuna and Atletico Madrid. He was in sharge of San Luis, Guadalajara and Queretaro with modest success before his appointment at the helm of America in July 2015. Although the fans wanted someone more high profile, he eventually won them over with an attacking and entertaining style of play. He is still, however, on a short leash and a bad result in the Club World Cup could put his job in danger.

STAR PLAYER

Moises MUNOZ

At 35 years old and 85kg, Moises Munoz looks more like a professional wrestler than a footballer, but behind his bulky physique he is one of the most consistent keepers in the country – and he even scored the goal that won the Clausura 2013, running the length of the pitch to head in a corner.

HOW THEY LINE UP

America will display a tactical flexibility in the Club World Cup. Against Guangzhou Evergrande they will probably line up in a 4-3-3 with only one anchorman, two attacking midfielders and three pure forwards. If they go through, they will definitely show a more restrained face against Barcelona, with a 4-4-1-1 with two holding midfielders.

TP MAZEMBE (DRC)

By Mark Gleeson

THE STORY SO FAR

A fifth continental title for TP Mazembe elevated the club from the backwater of Lubumbashi in the Katanga province of the Democratic Republic of Congo to second in the standings of the most successful club of all time in African competition.

Their success in this year's CAF Champions League, achieved almost without breaking sweat, confirms their status among the continent's best club sides ever – even if there was a period of more than three decades in which they performed in purgatory before reclaiming former glories. Founded by Benedictian monks in 1939, they were also runners-up in 1969 and 1970 and, with seven finals appearances, jump above Zamalek into a spot behind Al Ahli.

HOW THEY QUALIFIED

Mazembe were the only club from south of the Sahara to qualify for the group phase of this year's African Champions League yet they saw off the challenge of the Arabic-speaking north with consummate ease. They topped their group to advance to the semi-finals, where they beat Al Merreikh of Sudan 4-2 on aggregate to book a place against USM Alger in the decider. The Algerian side had been impressive in the group stage with a run of five successive wins but turned out to be no match for Mazembe in the Final. The Congolese had Rainford Kalaba sent off before half-time of the first leg and missed a penalty yet still finished with a 2-1 win and then sauntered through the return match at home to lift the trophy.

COACH

Patrice Carteron played for Laval, Rennes, Lyon and Saint-Etienne and had a short loan spell at Sunderland, before coaching at Dijon and taking them into the French top flight in 2011. Led Mali to third place at the 2013 African Nations Cup final before taking over Mazembe, where he has a contract that ends in January.

STAR PLAYER

Mbwana SAMATTA

Seven goals in the Champions League thrust 23-year-old Tanzania international into the spotlight as he proved the pivot for Mazembe's ascension to the Champions League throne. Comes from a footballing family and has been linked with a possible move to Belgium or France in the transfer window.

HOW THEY LINE UP

Mazembe have a direct approach, seeking to attack on the flanks and through a creative midfield. Their wide play is their strength, ensuring a steady diet of chances upfront. Nathan Sinkala anchors the midfield while centre-back Salif Coulibaly is imposing, but there is often some eccentric goalkeeping from 39-year-old Robert Kidiaba.

4-4-2

AUCKLAND CITY (NZ)

By Jason Pine

THE STORY SO FAR

Auckland City are, by some distance, Oceania's most successful club side of recent times. This will be their fifth consecutive appearance at the Club World Cup – and seventh in total – following their remarkable achievements in Morocco a year ago when they stunned the football world by finishing third. While they are theoretically an amateur club, City have professional approach and have long been the benchmark for other clubs in the region.

HOW THEY QUALIFIED

Victory in the OFC Champions League Final came courtesy of a penalty shoot-out after a 1-1 draw with New Zealand rivals Team Wellington. City reached the Final without conceding a goal and missed a penalty in extra-time against Team Wellington before eventually winning the shoot-out 4-3. Tempers flared after the final whistle and members of the two sides had to be separated.

COACH

Ramon Tribulietx has overseen a period of unprecedented success as Auckland City coach and it seems only a matter of time before the 43-year-old Spaniard is tempted away by an overseas offer. Tactically, he has always managed to set his team up to suit their opposition; in the New Zealand domestic league, opposition teams tend to sit back, meaning City need to be clever in possession and probe for openings, while in the Club World Cup they are more likely to be a side that looks to contain their opponents.

STAR PLAYER

Angel BERLANGA

Club talisman and winner of the Bronze Ball at last year's Club World Cup, Ivan Vicelich has been ruled out with injury this time but will take the role of assistant coach. In his absence, Spanish centre-back Angel Berlanga takes the armband and will try to get forward where possible.

HOW THEY LINE UP

Tribulietx is under no illusions that his side will spend long periods without the ball in Japan, so extensive work has been put into the shape the team will adopt when not in possession, enabling them to limit the attacking opportunities of the opposition. While chances may be few and far between, they have quick, skilful strikers who could cause problems.

4-3-3

GUANGZHOU EVERGRANDE (Chn)

By John Duerden

THE STORY SO FAR

Helped by major investment, Guangzhou Evergrande have come from almost nowhere to be the biggest club in Asia. A World Cup winning coach, Brazilian internationals, much of the Chinese national team and an average attendance of over 46,000: this is a club with major ambitions – not just to win in Asia but the world, too. In 2014, Evergrande, a conglomerate that started out in property and bought the club in 2010 for $16million, sold half to Jack Ma, founder of Alibaba, one of the biggest e-commerce sites in the world. The price was $192m. With five successive Chinese Super League titles and two of the last three Asian titles, they are deadly serious about the Club World Cup.

HOW THEY QUALIFIED

Under Fabio Cannavaro, in his first coaching job, Guangzhou made it out of the Champions League group with few worries, before squeezing past two-time former champions Seongnam in the last eight. In June, out went the Italian and in came Luiz Felipe Scolari. The Brazilian led the team to narrow victories over Japanese opposition Kashiwa Reysol and Gamba Osaka and then a 1-0 aggregate win over Al Ahli of Dubai in the Final.

COACH

Scolari is known around the world after winning the 2002 World Cup with Brazil and then being on the receiving end of a 7-1 thrashing at the hands of Germany in the semi-final of the 2014 edition. The former Chelsea coach was something of a surprise appointment in June as the team appeared to be doing fine under Cannavaro. However, the club wanted a Brazilian and had been chasing Scolari for some time.

STAR PLAYER

Zhang LINPENG

Robinho is the best known – though not registered for the Asian Champions League – but most eyes will be on Zhang. Just as the August transfer window shut, Chelsea came in with a bid but it was refused and there are rumours in southern China that a deal with Real Madrid has already been done.

HOW THEY LINE UP

With the addition of Paulinho in the summer, the team has more drive and creativity from a midfield that was a little on the pedestrian side. It's still solid though, with Chinese national team captain Zheng Zhi gaining in tactical intelligence and leadership what he lacks in speed. Look out for the driving runs of Zhang Linpeng down the flank.

4-3-1-2

RIVER PLATE (Arg)

By John Holmesdale

THE STORY SO FAR

The Buenos Aires club have been revived under coach Marcello Gallardo and sports director Enzo Francescoli, both former players. In August they won the Libertadores Cup after a 16-year wait, having won the Sudamericana Cup and the South America Super Cup in the preceeding months – meaning they currently boast an impressive full house of continental titles.

HOW THEY QUALIFIED

Won the Libertadores Cup for the third time in the club's history, defeating Mexican side Tigres.

COACH

Marcello Gallardo had three spells with the club as a player, winning six league titles, plus the Libertadores and Sudamericana Cups. He also played in France for Monaco and Paris Saint-Germain, and won 44 caps for Argentina, scoring 13 international goals. Took over River in June 2014 and renewed his contract this August, tying him to the club until 2017.

STAR PLAYER

MATIAS KRANEVITTER

The club's midfield playmaker will leave River and head to Spain after the tournament in Japan, having agreed a deal to join Atletico Madrid for €8million. Made his international debut in August and seen in Argentina as the long-term successor to Javier Mascherano.

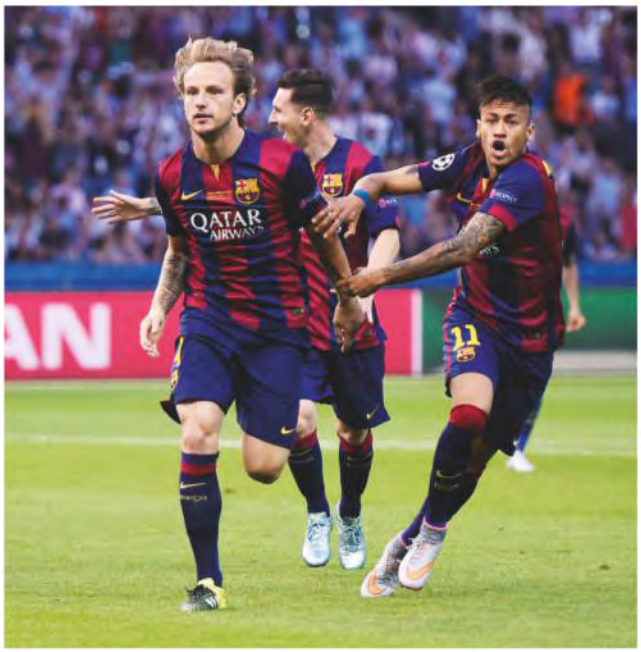
HOW THEY LINE UP

Gallardo likes his sides to press heavily and the coach tends to rotate his squad on a regular basis. He is also flexible with his formation, occasionally moving to a back three and pushing the wing-backs further forward. Kranevitter plays the classic number five role in deep midfield. Veteran forward Javier Saviola is an option on the bench.

4-4-2

BARCELONA (Spa)

By John Holmesdale



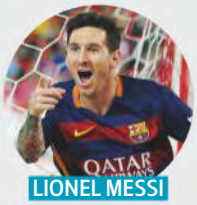
THE STORY SO FAR
Barca to Japan with the Spanish media debating whether the current team is the club's greatest ever. Certainly, the forward line of Lionel Messi, Neymar and Luis Suarez has been in wonderful form, culminating in the 4-0 demolition of Real Madrid (see page 24). Fears that the current transfer ban – which expires in January – would weaken the squad have proved unfounded; new arrivals, including summer signings Arda Turan and Aleix Vidal, are expected in the new year.

HOW THEY QUALIFIED
Beat Juventus 3-1 in Berlin to win the European Cup for a fifth time in the club's history. The victory enabled Barca to complete a treble of Champions League, La Liga and Spanish Cup to emulate the feat of Pep Guardiola's 2008-09 side. That team managed a record six titles in the calendar year of 2009. The current side cannot match that, having lost the Spanish Super Cup, though they did beat Sevilla in a dramatic UEFA Super Cup.

COACH

Former midfielder Luis Enrique is well versed in the club's tactical philospohy, having cut his coaching teeth with Barca's youth teams before spells at Roma and Celta Vigo. Took over as head coach in summer 2014, enduring a difficult start before everything fell into place as the 2014-15 campaign progressed.

STAR PLAYER



LIONEL MESSI
The world's best player is a shoe-in for the end-of-year awards after his starring role in Barcelona's silverware sweep last season. He missed much of the autumn through injury but recovered to appear as a substitute in the *classico* thrashing of Real Madrid.

HOW THEY LINE UP

Enrique's team play Barca's familiar free-flowing passing game but can also go more direct, slowing down the pace of a game before hitting precise long diagonal passes to the front three attackers. Enrique has limited options on the bench, although Sergi Roberto is a versatile young attacker and Munir El Haddadi can inject pace as an impact sub.

GAMBA OSAKA (Jap)

The 2014 J.League champions were due to face Sanfrecce Hiroshima in a two-legged J.League final play-off to decide the league championship as well as the right to represent Japan in the Club World Cup. Highly-rated attacker Takashi Usami (below) is back in Japan after an ill-fated spell in Germany with Bayern Munich.

SANFRECCE (Jap)

The team from Hiroshima won the J.League title in 2012 and 2013. They competed in the 2012 Club World Cup as the host team, beating Auckland City but then losing to African champions Al-Ahly. They then beat Ulsan Hyundai in the fifth/sixth place play-off. Toshihiro Aoyama (above) is their most accomplished player.

OCTOBER 27-NOVEMBER 25, 2015

Global diary

A comprehensive record of recent events around the world

Clash...Huracan's Ramon Abila (right) tangles with Brian Lozano of Defensor Sporting in the Sudamericana Cup quarter-finals

Tuesday October 27

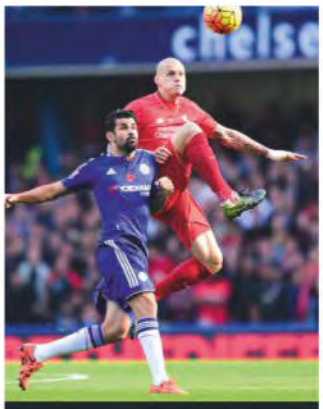
ARGENTINA: Huracan draw 0-0 with Defensor Sporting in Uruguay to advance to the semi-finals of the Sudamericana Cup, having won the first leg 1-0. Racing's Brian Fernandez is banned for two years, with the second year suspended, after testing positive for cocaine following a Libertadores Cup game against Wanderers of Uruguay in May.
ENGLAND: In the League Cup, second-tier Sheffield Wednesday beat Arsenal 3-0, while last season's winners Chelsea lose on penalties at Stoke City.
FIFA: The seven candidates who will contest the FIFA presidential election in February are confirmed as: Prince Ali bin al Hussein, Musa Bility, Jerome Champagne, Gianni Infantino, Michel Platini, Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim al Khalifa and Tokyo Sexwale.
FRANCE: Ligue 1 high-flyers Angers suffer a surprise exit from the League Cup, going down 1-0 to second-tier side Tours.
GERMANY: Bayern Munich beat German Cup holders Wolfsburg 3-1 and will be joined in the next round by third-tier Erzgebirge Aue, who beat Eintracht Frankfurt 1-0, and fourth-tier Unterhaching, who won 2-0 at home to RB Leipzig.
ITALY: Ten-man Internazionale, who have Felipe Melo sent off, win 1-0 at Bologna to go top of Serie A.
SCOTLAND: Ross County reach the Scottish League Cup semi-finals for the first time with a 2-1 derby win at Inverness Caledonian Thistle.

Wednesday October 28

ARGENTINA: Despite losing 2-1 to Chapecoense in Brazil, River Plate win 4-3 on aggregate to progress to the semi-finals of the Sudamericana Cup, where they will meet Paraguay's Sportivo Luqueno, who beat Atletico Paranaense of Brazil.
ENGLAND: More than 10,000 away fans see second-tier Middlesbrough win on penalties at Manchester United in the League Cup.
HOLLAND: Feyenoord beat Ajax 1-0 in the Dutch Cup thanks to a last-minute own goal by Joel Veltman.
ITALY: Bologna dismiss Delio Rossi after the previous evening's home defeat by Inter and appoint former national coach Roberto Donadoni. Roma regain top spot in Serie A with a 3-1 win over Udinese, while Juventus lose 1-0 at Sassuolo.
SAN MARINO: Reigning league champions Folgore beat Murata 2-0 in the Sammarinese Super Cup.
SPAIN: Bottom of La Liga, Levante name Rubi as the replacement for coach Lucas Alcaraz, who was sacked after a 4-0 home defeat by Real Sociedad at the weekend. Barcelona are held to a goalless draw at third-tier Villanovense in the first leg of their Spanish Cup tie.
TURKEY: Referee Cagatay Sahan and his assistants claim they are locked in the Huseyin Avni Aker Stadium for several hours, on the orders of Trabzonspor club president Ibrahim Haciosmanoglu, after turning down a penalty appeal by the hosts late on in their 2-2 Super Lig draw with Gaziantepspor.
USA: MLS Cup holders Los Angeles Galaxy lose 3-2 to Seattle Sounders in the opening round of the play-offs.

Thursday October 29

COLOMBIA: Sante Fe deny Argentina a third spot in the Sudamericana Cup semi-finals as they draw 1-1 at home to Independiente and go through 2-1 on aggregate.
GREECE: German coach Michael Skibbe signs a two-year deal to lead the national team. The 50-year-old replaces Sergio Markarian, who was sacked after less than six months in the job. Gus Poyet is appointed boss of AEK Athens.
USA: Didier Drogba makes it 12 goals in his 12 games as Montreal Impact beat Toronto 3-0 to reach the Eastern Conference semi-finals of the MLS Cup. After a 2-2 draw in the Western Conference, Portland Timbers beat Kansas City on penalties after 22 spot-kicks in the longest shoot-out ever in the MLS Cup. Timbers keeper Adam Kwarasey saves three spot-kicks, and then scores the winner.
CAMEROON: Alexandre Belinga is named interim coach of the national side after Volker Finke is sacked.
GERMANY: Bayern Munich's record-breaking run of 10 victories at the start of a Bundesliga campaign comes to an end with a goalless


Comeback...Liverpool (in red) beat Chelsea

draw at Eintracht Frankfurt.
SPAIN: Diego Simeone names an unchanged Atletico Madrid side for the first time in nearly two years. However, his side miss the chance to go top of La Liga as they are held to a 1-1 draw at home by Deportivo La Coruna.
UKRAINE: Alex Teixeira scores twice to make it 18 goals in 12 league games as Shakhtar Donetsk win 7-1 away to Zorya Luhansk.

Saturday October 31

CHINA: Guangzhou Evergrande win the Chinese Super League title for a fifth successive season with a 2-0 victory away to Beijing Guoan on the final day of the campaign.
DR CONGO: TP Mazembe win 2-1 away to USM Alger of Algeria in the first leg of the CAF Champions League Final.
ENGLAND: Liverpool come from being a goal behind to win 3-1 against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. Leicester City beat West Bromwich ➤

Sound job...Seattle celebrate beating Los Angeles Galaxy

Ecuador

TIM VICKERY

Ecuador lead from the front

Quinteros' men are early pacesetters in World Cup qualifiers

It looks as though the Centenary Copa America will go ahead next June after all, with the host cities in the USA having been announced. South American football, then, is ready to celebrate 1916 and the birth of the world's oldest continental tournament.

However, in future years, perhaps 1996 will also be seen as a cause for celebration.

That was when CONMEBOL introduced the current marathon format of World Cup qualification, with the 10 countries playing each other home and away. Before that, with the nations divided into groups, there were few competitive games. But with South American teams enjoying the kind of calendar that is taken for granted in Europe, there has been a rapid rise in the standard of the less traditional nations.

Ecuador are the outstanding example. Prior to 1996 they had only ever won five World Cup qualifiers and had never played on the biggest stage. They have now been to three World Cups, reaching the second round in 2006, and stand proudly at the top of the table in the race to Russia 2018, with four wins from four games, including a deserved victory away to Argentina.

Ecuador's fine start has come as a surprise to some after they were eliminated in the group phase of the Copa America in June. But, as *World Soccer* commented at the time: "New coach Gustavo Quinteros was not devastated by first-round elimination. His team showed its considerable firepower, but were undermined by what the coach referred to as 'gross errors' at the back. Tightening up the defence will be a priority for a side which have a settled style of play."

Ecuador's strength is in the pace and skill with which they attack down the flanks, where Antonio Valencia on the right and Jefferson Montero on the left are a full-back's nightmare. The pair tore Argentina to shreds, but after showing imperious form in the first two rounds Valencia picked up an injury.

And in the current campaign Ecuador have not been able to field the man who is far and away their best centre-forward as Enner Valencia has been injured. In his absence, Felipe Caicedo has been full of goals, while Juan Cazares is developing nicely as an attacking playmaker, picking his passes well in the final third when he comes on as a second-half substitute.

All of these players are benefiting from Quinteros' tactic of bringing the defensive line higher to leave little space between the centre-backs and the midfielder pair in front of them. The team are winning the ball and feeding their wingers higher up the pitch in the hope that Ecuador's defenders – by no means as talented as the attacking players – are not exposed in open space.

Indeed, Ecuador's biggest headache is the lack of quality young defenders and there will surely be times during the course of the campaign when they are caught out at the back. In an 18-game series it is all but inevitable that a run of poor results will occur at some point. However, Quinteros can take comfort from the points already on the board. In previous campaigns, eight wins have always been enough to carry a team over the line to qualification. Ecuador have four – and 14 games left to accumulate the others.

Quinteros will, however, be praying for the good health of the side's unsung hero, central midfielder Christian Noboa. As well as sitting in front of the defence, he links the side together with the quality and wisdom of his passing, and he is the supply line for those dangerous wingers. WS

Impressive...Jefferson Montero (no7) celebrates his goal against Venezuela in November

Albion 3-2 as Jamie Vardy scores for an eighth consecutive Premier League game.
FRANCE: Lyon overcome bottom side Troyes to go second in Ligue 1.
GERMANY: Having been bottom of the league in September, Borussia Monchengladbach move into fifth place with a 4-1 win at Hertha Berlin. The Matip brothers face each other for the first time, as Joel's Schalke draw 1-1 with Marvin's Ingolstadt.
HOLLAND: PSV win 6-3 at bottom side De Graafschap.
ITALY: Internazionale beat Roma 1-0 to leapfrog their visitors into top spot in Serie A. Juan Cuadrado scores an injury-time winner in the Turin derby as Juventus beat Torino 2-1.
JAPAN: Kashima Antlers beat Gamba Osaka to win the J.League Cup Final 3-0.
LITHUANIA: Zalgiris claim the league title with a 1-0 win against Atlantas to make it three domestic doubles in a row.
MALAYSIA: Johor Darul Ta'zim are the first Malaysian club to win the AFC Cup, beating Istiklol of Tajikistan 1-0 with a goal from Argentinian midfielder Leandro Velazquez.
SOUTH AFRICA: Orlando Pirates beat Kaizer Chiefs 3-1 in front of more than 80,000 spectators in the Soweto derby.
SPAIN: Brazil's Dani Alves becomes the first non-Spaniard to play 400 games in La Liga as Barcelona win 2-0 at Getafe to go joint top of the table with Real Madrid, who beat Las Palmas 3-1.
SWEDEN: Norrkoping beat defending champions Malmo 2-0 on the final day of the season to clinch the Swedish championship for the first time since 1989.

Sunday November 1

ARGENTINA: Fabian Monzon's lone goal gives Boca Juniors a 1-0 victory over Tigre and secures their 31st league title with a game to spare.
ENGLAND: Arouna Kone scores a hat-trick as Everton beat Sunderland 6-2, while Southampton overcome Bournemouth 2-0 in the south-coast derby.
FRANCE: Georges Nkoudou scores against his former club Nantes as Marseille win 1-0 to record back-to-back league victories for the first time this season. Monaco beat high-fliers Angers 1-0.
GERMANY: Stuttgart and Hanover climb out of the bottom three, beating Darmstadt 2-0 and Hamburg 2-1 respectively.
ITALY: Fiorentina return to the top of the table with a 4-1 victory over Frosinone as Napoli are held to a ➤

Africa

MARK GLEESON

And then there were 20

World Cup qualification campaign moves on at a pace

In double quick time, almost a third of the 56 African entrants in the 2018 World Cup are out of the preliminaries, with two rounds of knockout matches decimating the field with almost indecent haste. For many, the World Cup experience lasted just a handful of days, as Africa changed its qualification format from that of four years ago, when 40 countries went on to participate in an expansive group phase.

This time, just 20 countries go into the group stage, which starts next October after the completion of the 2017 African Nations Cup qualifiers. Why CAF agreed with FIFA to limit the numbers and deprive more than half their constituents of a regular diet of international action is baffling and counter to both organisations' ambitions for the development of the African game.

"We had a World Cup that lasted only five days and now have to wait again for 2022," said Angola coach Romeu Filemon after his side lost 4-1 on aggregate to South Africa. "There is a generation of players who lose out on a lot of experience."

The 2010 World Cup hosts are joined by a bevy of other past finalists as 18 of Africa's 20 top-ranked teams advanced. It is a formidable field and it is the one positive of the new-style format that almost every game in the group phase is set to be keenly contested – although the abiding image of the knockout rounds was of how the gap between the lower-ranked sides and African football's heavyweights has closed.

Ghana and Nigeria were both run close by countries ranked in the basement of the world game. The tiny Comoros Islands showed the benefits of strengthening their team with players from the immigrant community in France to stretch Ghana over two legs and come perilously close to what would have been the continent's biggest World Cup upset of all time.

They struck the woodwork and had a legitimate-looking effort ruled offside near the end of the first leg and also hit the post away in Kumasi in the return before Ghana wrapped it up late for a 2-0 aggregate triumph after the islanders were reduced to 10 men. Meanwhile, Swaziland held Nigeria to a goalless draw at home and remained competitive in the return before also going out 2-0.

Force...Algeria's Islam Slimani gets in a header against Tanzania

Out..Angola's Bastos (left) gets the better of South Africa's Thamsanqa Gabuza, but his team were knocked out of the World Cup

> "We had a World Cup that lasted only five days"
> Angola coach Romeu Filemon

Cameroon, who had axed coach Volker Finke just weeks before, labored through the second leg of their tie with Niger and were held to a goalless draw but had the cushion of a 3-0 win in the first leg.

There was also the odd one-sided contest, notably Algeria's 7-0 home win over Tanzania after finding themselves 2-0 down in the first leg before rallying to draw 2-2 in Dar-es-Salaam. The second-leg showing came despite speculation over the future of coach Christian Gourcuff, who was linked with a move back to Ligue 1 amid criticism of his tactics from Algerian fans seeking a more expansive approach.

The other countries with previous World Cup

experience who are through are DR Congo, Egypt, Ivory Coast, Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia.

Angola and Togo are the only countries with past World Cup experience who broke down on the road to Russia. Togo, with Emmanuel Adebayor watching from the stands as his career sits in purgatory, were comprehensively outplayed home and away by Uganda.

Cape Verde are now up to third in the African rankings as their transition from minnows to a major force on the continent continues unchecked. Under ex-Portugal international Rui Aguas they eliminated Kenya 2-1 on aggregate and could be a seeded team when the draw for the group phase is conducted.

The biggest success was arguably that of Libya, who won 3-1 away in Rwanda on the second leg under Javier Clemente, the former Spain coach, after only being able to force a narrow 1-0 win in their "home" leg.

Home is the neutral territory of neighbouring Tunisia, or sometimes Egypt, because the civil strife in Libya is such that it is unsafe to travel there. WS

WC QUALIFICATION: THIRD ROUND

On June 24, in Cairo, these remaining 20 teams will be drawn into five groups of four teams, with the winners of each qualifying for the 2018 finals

Ivory Coast
Algeria
Ghana
Cape Verde
Senegal
Tunisia
Cameroon
Congo
Guinea
DR Congo
Egypt
Nigeria
Mali
Uganda
Zambia
Gabon
South Africa
Morocco
Burkina Faso
Libya

In...Nigeria make the group stage

goalless draw at Genoa.
RUSSIA: Second-place Lokomotiv Moscow are thrashed 6-2 at Kuban Krasnodar for a third loss in a row.
USA: Dax McCarty scores against his former side as New York Red Bulls beat DC United in the first leg of their Eastern Conference semi-final.

Monday November 2

ENGLAND: On the day Remi Garde is announced as Aston Villa's new boss, caretaker Kevin MacDonald's side lose 3-1 at Tottenham Hotspur.
GREECE: Following Sunday's goalless draw with AEK, Panathinaikos coach Giannis Anastasiou parts company with the club by mutual consent.

Tuesday November 3

ENGLAND: Manchester City go through to the last 16 of the Champions League with a 3-1 win away at Sevilla.
ITALY: Sacked after just six games this season, Fabrizio Castori returns to take charge of Carpi after his successor Giuseppe Sannino suffers three successive defeats and the side drop to the bottom of Serie A.
SPAIN: Real Madrid's 1-0 victory over Paris Saint-Germain sees them qualify for the knockout stage of the Champions League.

Wednesday November 4

ARGENTINA: Four days after they claimed the league title, Boca Juniors beat Rosario Central 2-0 to win the Argentinian Cup.
COLOMBIA: Sante Fe earn a 1-1 draw way to Sportivo Luqueno of Paraguay in the opening leg of their Sudamericana Cup semi-final.
ENGLAND: Arsenal equal their heaviest-ever European defeat, going down 5-1 away to Bayern Munich in the Champions League.
MOROCCO: After just four months as coach, ex-Holland captain Ruud Krol is sacked by Raja Casablanca the day after they lose 2-0 to FUS Rabat in the Moroccan Cup semi-finals.
RUSSIA: Zenit maintain their 100 per cent record in the group stage and reach the last 16 of the Champions League with a 2-0 win at Lyon.

Thursday November 5

ARGENTINA: Huracan win 1-0 at River Plate in the first leg of their all-Argentinian Sudamericana Cup semi-final.
NORWAY: At 40 years and 98 days, Daniel Helstad becomes the oldest scorer in Europa League history as Molde win 2-1 at Celtic and qualify for the last-32 knock-out stage.
SWITZERLAND: With a penalty in Basle's 2-0 win at Belenenses, ➤

Myanmar

STEVE MENARY

New beginnings

Time for football to catch up with the nation's new democratic outlook

As the reclusive Asian nation of Myanmar edges towards political respectability, football is also recovering. But with that comes growing pains. When the country was still known as Burma, the "White Angels" reached the Asian Cup Final in 1968 and qualified for the 1972 Olympic tournament. But progress dissipated as a military junta, which seized control in 1962, exerted increasing power over all aspects of society.

After international outrage over human rights abuses, gradual liberalisation saw a handover to a nominally civilian government in 2011, and elections in November saw Aung San Suu Kyi's opposition party, the National League for Democracy, win an absolute majority in both houses of the Assembly, possibly paving the way to democracy.

Backing...a sticker in support of Aung San Suu Kyi

> "Clubs must take their own initiatives so that the community can identify with the teams"
>
> Malaysian coach PN Sinvaj

Myanmar also began to re-engage with international football, playing a first World Cup qualifier in 2007. Two years later the Myanmar National League (MNL) replaced the old Premier League, which was based mainly in the country's largest city, Yangon.

These days, half the MNL clubs have their own stadiums and 2015 champions Yangon use a 3G artificial pitch. Attendance levels, however, are poor, and while inaugural champions Yadanarbon are well supported – and Kanbawza claim crowds of 6,700 – the league average is around 500.

"The dwindling crowds, especially for the matches in Yangon, must be of concern," says Malaysian coach PN Sinvaj, who first came to Myanmar in 2010 and this summer coached Hanthawaddy United. "The MNL has introduced many new initiatives to spark interest in the league which are commendable. Clubs, however, must take their own initiatives so that the community can identify with the teams."

Since liberalisation, companies and local businessmen control clubs, but presidents signing players without the knowledge of the club's coach is common. According to MNL regulations, players must be full-time and the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) allows clubs to recruit up to four from overseas, including one from Asia.

Initially this prompted a surge of agents looking to cash in and some players were on up to $10,000 a month according to Dave Booth, a much-travelled Englishman who was the national coach from 2000 to 2003. "It's certainly opened up and local players now can compete regularly with foreign players, play at a higher level and receive decent salaries," says Booth.

After some initial problems, Singapore-based agency Trebol Sports International has placed six overseas players in Myanmar since December 2013. "The trust level for foreign agents had decreased because certain rogue agents had upset local club officials," says Bryan Lim, Trebol's sporting director.

Trebol's deals brought Croatian striker Tihomir Zivkovic from Montenegro to first Kanbawza and then Zwekapin United – where he was joined by another client, Japanese striker Atsushi Yonewaza from Indonesia's Persiba Bantul. Both are on around $3,000 per month and that fall in wages has hit standards.

"The level of football dished out appears to have fallen from the 2010-2012 years," says Sinvaj. "Clubs are looking for cheaper options when engaging foreign players.

"Not many foreigners can entice fans to pay good money and watch them play."

Most clubs provide accommodation for overseas players, while Zwekapin also put up and feed local players, but conditions are not great, according to coach Kevin Reeves, who took charge of Zwekapin in February 2015.

"Accommodation is very basic," he admits. "A large annex, no windows, very little light, camp beds, and, if they are lucky, a mosquito net.

"Their washing facilities are a small concrete or brick area under the trees, full of cold water which is not always fresh. They have access to electric for radio or laptop but no Wi-Fi. The only TV is where the reception area is, and the president's office."

After a Zwekapin player suffered a serious injury in Monywa, Reeves was confronted with medical facilities he describes as "the most distressing thing

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

A British colony until 1948, the country was known as Burma until 1948, when the ruling junta changed the name to Myanmar.

Size: 676,578 sq km
Population: 56.3 million
Capital: Naypyidaw
Language: Burmese
Religion: Buddhist

Support...fans at November's World Cup qualifier in Suwon, South Korea

Challenge...Kyaw Ko Ko (left) and Thiha Zaw in World Cup action against South Korea in November

I've ever witnessed in my life".

A former academy coach at Stoke City, he says the playing standard is comparable to League Two in England, adding: "The bigger teams, Yangon, Magwe, Yadanarbon, Kanbawza were slightly better. They had national team players, so you would expect it to a point."

Reeves recently returned to the UK and says he will not return to Zwekapin, but he would go back to Myanmar. "The people are crazy about football but more for the national team," he explains.

Myanmar's success in qualifying for this summer's Under-20 World Cup finals in New Zealand was yet another step in re-joining the international game. But a place at the senior event looks unlikely for now as the club game struggles to catch up with Asia's more developed nations. WS

Marc Janko is the first player to score for four clubs in the Europa League, having previously found the net for Salzburg, Twente and Trabzonspor.

Friday November 6

ROMANIA: League leaders Astra win 2-1 at second-place Viitorul and extend their lead at the top of the table to four points.

Saturday November 7

CHINA: Guangzhou Evergrande manage a goalless draw in the opening leg of the AFC Champions League Final, away to Al Ahli of UAE.
ENGLAND: Jamie Vardy scores again as Leicester City beat Watford 2-1, while Chelsea lose 1-0 at Stoke City.
FRANCE: Paris Saint-Germain extend their unbeaten run in Ligue 1 to 22 matches since March with a 5-0 win against Toulouse.
GERMANY: Bayern Munich go eight points clear at the top of the table with a 4-0 win over Stuttgart. Andre Schubert's six-game winning run as caretaker coach of Borussia Monchengladbach ends with a goalless draw at home to Ingolstadt.
ITALY: Bologna win 2-0 at fellow strugglers Verona, who remain the only side without a victory in Serie A.
TURKEY: Umut Bulut is sent off as Galatasaray suffer a surprise 4-3 defeat at Rizespor.

Sunday November 8

DR CONGO: TP Mazembe will represent Africa in December's Club World Cup as a 2-0 win at home to USM Alger gives them a 4-1 victory on aggregate over the Algerians in the CAF Champions League Final.
ENGLAND: Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur draw 1-1, while Liverpool lose for the first time under Jurgen Klopp, going down 2-1 at home to Crystal Palace.
FRANCE: Alexandre Lacazette grabs a hat-trick as Lyon beat Saint-Etienne 3-0 in the last derby clash at the Stade de Gerland. Marseille lose 1-0 at home to Nice, while Bordeaux come from behind to win 3-1 and end Monaco's 10-game unbeaten run.
GERMANY: Borussia Dortmund beat rivals Schalke 3-2 in the Ruhr derby.
HOLLAND: PSV beat Utrecht 3-1 and go second, above Feyenoord who draw 1-1 with leaders Ajax.
ITALY: Fiorentina retain top spot with a 2-0 victory at Sampdoria, while Roma beat city rivals Lazio by the same scoreline.
KAZAKHSTAN: Astana beat Aktobe to retain the league title.
MEXICO: Pumas secure top spot in the apertura championship, ahead of the eight-team play-offs, by beating Queretaro 2-1.
NIGERIA: Despite having striker Etor Daniel sent off, Enyimba claim the league title for a seventh time with a 0-0 draw at home to closest rivals Warri Wolves. A 2-0 Final victory over Mali sees Nigeria retain the Under-17 World Cup in Chile.
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND: Dundalk clinch their first double since 1988 as Richie Towell's extra-time goal gives them a 1-0 victory over Cork City in the FAI Cup Final.
RUSSIA: League table-toppers CSKA Moscow's unbeaten start to the season ends with a 2-1 defeat by Krasnodar. Lokomotiv beat defending champions Zenit 2-0.
SPAIN: Real Madrid lose for the first time this season, going down 3-2 at Sevilla, and drop three points behind Barcelona, who beat Villarreal 3-0.
USA: Kei Kamara scores twice as Columbus Crew beat Montreal Impact 3-1 in extra time to clinch a 4-3 aggregate victory and reach the Eastern Conference Final.

Monday November 9

GERMANY: Wolfgang Niersbach, the president of the German Football Federation, resigns following corruption allegations.
ISRAEL: Hapoel Be'er Sheva beat Hapoel Haifa 1-0 to go top of the league on goal difference.
SPAIN: A day short of his one-year anniversary as coach of the club, David Moyes is sacked by Real Sociedad, who are only outside the relegation zone on goal difference. He is replaced by former Barcelona B coach Eusebio Sacristan.
SWEDEN: Zlatan Ibrahimovic is named Swedish player of the year for the ninth time in a row, and 10th in total since 2005.
USA: Patrick Vieira signs a three-year deal to coach New York City.

Tuesday November 10

ITALY: Palermo president Maurizio Zamparini makes his 29th coaching change since taking charge in 2002, sacking Giuseppe Iachini and replacing him with Davide Ballardini. Sampdoria dismiss Walter Zenga.
USA: Rayo Vallecano become the first Spanish top-flight side to launch a team in the United States with the announcement that Rayo OKC will play in the NASL from next year.

Wednesday November 11

FRANCE: Lille sack Herve Renard after only 13 Ligue 1 games as coach and put his assistant, Patrick Collot, in temporary control.
JAPAN: At the age of 48, Kazuyoshi ➤

Miura – who extended his own record as the oldest scorer in the Japanese leagues in June – signs a new one-year contract with second-tier Yokohama.

Thursday November 12

ARGENTINA: The World Cup qualifier against Brazil is postponed less than an hour before kick-off after torrential rain in Buenos Aires leaves the Monumental stadium heavily waterlogged.
CHINA: Leading 7-0 at half-time, China go on to beat Bhutan 12-0 in the World Cup qualifiers, with Yang Xu scoring four times.
ECUADOR: A 2-1 win at home to Uruguay means Ecuador are the only South American team in the World Cup qualifiers with a 100 per cent record after three games.
FIFA: Liberia's Musa Bility is ruled out as a candidate for the FIFA presidency following integrity checks.
HUNGARY: Gabor Kiraly keeps a clean sheet on his 100th appearance as Hungary win 1-0 in Norway in the first leg of their Euro play-off.
ROMANIA: Lucian Balan, who was a European Cup winner with Steaua Bucharest in 1986, is found dead at his home after committing suicide.
UGANDA: Denis Onyango saves a second-half penalty and Joseph Ochaya scores the only goal of the game as Uganada win 1-0 in Togo for a first-ever away victory in a World Cup qualifier.

Top...Brisbane Roar (in orange)

Friday November 13

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: Edin Dzeko scores a late equaliser to cancel out Robbie Brady's opener as Bosnia draw 1-1 with the Republic of Ireland in the first leg of their Euro 2016 play-off.
BRAZIL: David Luiz is sent off as Brazil draw 1-1 away to Argentina in a World Cup qualifier that had been postponed for 24 hours due to adverse weather conditions.
FRANCE: Three suicide bombers die in blasts outside the Stade de France as France beat Germany 2-0 on a night when at least 129 people are killed in terrorist attacks across Paris. One of those murdered in the capital was the cousin of *Les Bleus* midfielder Lassana Diarra, who was playing in the game.
USA: After falling behind to Caribbean minnows St Vincent & the Grenadines, USA recovered to win their World Cup qualifier 6-1.

Saturday November 14

SWEDEN: Zlatan Ibrahimovic scores his ninth goal in nine qualifiers as Sweden beat Denmark 2-1 in the first leg of their Euro play-off.
UKRAINE: Having lost all five of their previous play-offs for major finals, Ukraine take a 2-0 lead over Slovenia from the home leg of their Euro 2016 decider.

Sunday November 15

AUSTRALIA: A 1-0 win at home to Perth Glory puts Brisbane Roar top of the A-League, two points clear of Sydney, who lost 4-2 at Melbourne Victory on Saturday.
HUNGARY: A 2-1 win at home to Norway in the Euro play-offs to seal a 3-1 aggregate victory sees Hungary reach their first major finals since the 1986 World Cup.
ITALY: Sampdoria appoint Vincenzo Montella as their new coach, on a two-and-a-half-year contract.
UGANDA: A 3-0 victory over Togo puts Uganda in the group stage of the World Cup qualifiers in Africa.
USA: Real Madrid legend Raul ends his playing career a winner as New York Cosmos claim the NASL Soccer Bowl with a 3-2 victory over Ottawa Fury thanks to a hat-trick from Gaston Cellerino.

Monday November 16

FIFA: All Nepal Football Association president Ganesh Thapa and Laotian Football Federation president Viphet Sihachakr are banned for 10 years and two years respectively by the ethics committee for taking cash during FIFA elections.
NIGERIA: Kidnappers abduct the 72-year-old mother of the country's national under-23 coach Samson Siasia in the village of Odoni, in the southern state of Bayelsa.
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND: Jon Walters, who missed the 1-1 first-leg draw through suspension, scores twice as Ireland beat Bosnia-Herzegovina 3-1 on aggregate to qualify for the Euro finals.

Tuesday November 17

BELGIUM: A friendly against Spain in Brussels is called off overnight due ➤

New Zealand

SIMON HILL

Pheonix set to fall?

Nix future hangs by a thread

Heard the one about the FIFA Confederation that doesn't have a single professional football club? Well, you might do soon because Oceania's sole full-time outfit, New Zealand's Wellington Phoenix, have been put on notice after a request for a 10-year extension to their licence to play in the Australian A-League was rejected.

Teams from across the Tasman have a long history of inclusion in sporting competitions in Australia and football has had Kiwi involvement since the dreadfully named Football Kingz entered the National Soccer League in 1999. The Kingz failed to qualify for the end-of-season finals in each of their five seasons before they disbanded, along with the old competition.

When the A-League opened its doors in 2005, room was found for the New Zealand Knights – who, like the Kingz, were based out of the biggest city, Auckland. However, the Knights fared even worse and finished last in each of their two seasons, playing in front of paltry crowds at the remote North Harbour Stadium. Football Federation Australia soon revoked the licence and transferred it into the hands of New Zealand Soccer (now NZ Football).

> **Wellington Phoenix became the first Kiwi team to reach the A-League finals and have repeated the trick on three further occasions**

NZS struggled to find new financial backers ahead of the 2007-08 season, until a businessman from Wellington named Terry Serepisos stepped in to provide the cash and shifted the club to the capital.

Wellington Phoenix have since enjoyed relative success, becoming the first Kiwi team to reach the finals and repeating the trick on three further occasions. Despite a relatively small population, big crowds have occasionally shown up too, with the club record being 32,792 for a finals game with Newcastle Jets in 2010.

Serepisos was succeeded by the Welnix consortium, who have run the club prudently while at the same time expanding infrastructure, including a youth academy, and running a reserve team in the local New Zealand competition.

"The Nix" have provided nearly 30 players for New

Backing...Pheonix fans show their support for the club

Zealand national teams in the last eight years and invested big money in luring clubs such as Boca Juniors, Los Angeles Galaxy, Newcastle United and West Ham United to play in friendly matches. They even tried to build their own stadium in nearby Petone before local residents put an end to the plan.

On many levels, Phoenix are a good example of how to run a small, modern football club. So what is the problem?

The answer, as usual, is money...with a little bit of politics thrown in.

The politics boils down to the fact that Phoenix are an Oceania club playing in an Asian competition, after Australia switched from Oceania to the AFC in 2006. The AFC has never been keen on their participation and should they ever win the A-League they would be denied participation in the Asian Champions League.

But it's money that really talks. Having a New Zealand team in the league was done with the intention of tapping into a potential market of an extra four million people – seen as vital, with Australia's population only a touch over 23 million.

However, the television deal with Sky New Zealand brings in barely $200,000 (£95,000) per annum. In comparison with the $40million (£19m) investment made by broadcasters in Australia, it's small change – and FFA wants an increase, along with creating a bigger national footprint for the club.

Secondly, FFA estimates Phoenix cost $3m (£1.4m) a year in terms of the annual TV dividend, plus associated travel expenses for clubs – money they believe could be put to better use developing football in Australia. FFA would like NZF to help by providing stronger backing for a club they directly benefit from. On that, they and Phoenix agree.

The third part of the equation is low crowds, with the Phoenix average last season of 8,689 at the lower end of the 10-team competition. Phoenix TV ratings struggle too, with Australian viewers largely lukewarm towards a team from another country.

FFA have offered Phoenix a four-year extension to prove their worth, but if the club reject the offer it is likely that professional club football will never return in a country obsessed with Rugby Union.

Phoenix argue their "metrics" are competitive with other A-League outfits and there has been some backlash from fans in Australia, who have shown solidarity with a club that quickly became part of the A-League furniture.

Potential...Pheonix's Roly Bonevacia was a Holland under-19 cap

Lurking on the horizon is the next TV deal. With the success of the Sydney derby, FFA is keen to test the waters further by introducing a third club in Australia's biggest city. If they can find the right backing it may be Phoenix who will be the fall guys.

That would be a pity. Not just for Phoenix and their small but passionate fan base, led by the "Yellow Fever", but also for New Zealand and, by extension, Oceania. For a confederation to exist without a professional club would underline just how marginalised football is, in a part of the world where the oval ball dominates.

In the meantime, the Welnix group are considering their options as the future of the most successful club side ever to come out of New Zealand hangs by a thread. WS

to security fears following the deadly attacks in Paris.
GERMANY: After receiving "concrete information" about an impending terrorist threat, the Germany-Holland friendly in Hanover is cancelled just 90 minutes before kick-off.
QATAR: A 3-0 victory over Bhutan sees Qatar become the first side to book their place at the 2019 Asian Cup finals.
SAUDI ARABIA: Saudi Arabia set a new national record with a 10-0 victory away to Timor-Leste in a World Cup preliminary game.
SWEDEN: Zlatan Ibrahimovic scores both goals as Sweden draw 2-2 in Denmark to win 4-3 on aggregate and qualify for the Euro finals.
UKRAINE: Andriy Yarmolenko's injury-time equaliser gives Ukraine a 1-1 draw on the night and a 3-1 aggregate victory over Slovenia to qualify for France 2016.

Wednesday November 18

FIFA: Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini have their appeals against their 90-day provisional suspensions by FIFA's ethics committee rejected.

Thursday November 19

BRAZIL: Corinthians, who draw 1-1 with Vasco da Gama, win the Brazilian championship with three games to spare as Atletico Mineiro lose 4-2 at Sao Paulo.
COLOMBIA: Despite losing 1-0 away to Santa Fe, Junior win their first Colombian Cup thanks to their 2-0 victory in the first leg of the Final.
TURKEY: Goalkeeping coach Claudio Taffarel takes temporary charge of Galatasaray the day after Hamza Hamzaoglu left by mutual agreement.

Friday November 20

BELGIUM: Lokeren v Anderlecht on Saturday and Mouscron-Peruwelz v Charleroi on Sunday are called off as fears of a terrorist attack in Brussels remain high.
CROATIA: Dinamo Zagreb midfielder Arijan Ademi is banned for four years after failing a drugs test following the Champions League win over Arsenal in September.
FRANCE: Nice beat second-placed Lyon 3-0 to go third in Ligue 1.
GERMANY: Second-placed Borussia Dortmund lose 3-1 at Hamburg.

Saturday November 21

CHINA: Brazilian striker Elkeson scores the only goal of the two-leg Final as Guangzhou Evergrande beat Al Ahli 1-0 on aggregate to win the AFC Champions League for the second time in three years.
COSTA RICA: Cartagines retain ➤

Asia

JOHN DUERDEN

Scolari eyes bigger prize

Asian champions seek global success

The 2014 World Cup may have ended badly for Luiz Felipe Scolari but he has a quicker than usual opportunity to redeem himself when taking Guangzhou Evergrande to the club version in December. And it has surely not escaped the coach's attention that the Yokohama venue for the Final is the same Japanese stadium in which he lifted the 2002 World Cup with Brazil.

Happy memories, then, and this year has been a much happier time in general for Scolari.

"Big Phil" took over Guangzhou Evergrande in June and didn't lose a single game as he led the team to a fifth successive Chinese Super League title.

More importantly, they also picked up a second Asian Champions League title in three years, defeating Al Ahli of United Arab Emirates 1-0 over the two legs in the Final.

The first leg in Dubai ended goalless, with Al Ahli never really threatening despite being led by Cosmin Olariou – a Romanian who has won league titles in his homeland, Saudi Arabia and the last three in the Emirates. It has been a good year for UAE football with a young and exciting team finishing third at the Asian Cup in January, but while Al Ahli have one of the continent's best strikers in Ahmed Khalil, the team were second best.

Even Olariou admitted that the occasion got to the "Red Knights" as Guangzhou Evergrande controlled proceedings without managing to break the deadlock. Zheng Zhi and Paulinho – who was signed from Tottenham Hotspur in the summer for around $16million – in midfield cut off the supply lines to Lima who, after joining Al Ahli from Benfica in the summer, had scored in his previous 12 games for the club. Thirteenth was unlucky for Lima, though, and he rarely saw the ball.

Asia kings...Guangzhou Evergrande make it two out of three titles

New addition... summer signing Paulinho beats Al Ahli's Majed Hassan

> Scolari could afford to bring in Robinho during the summer and not even register him for the tournament

The goalless first leg and the dangers of an away goal didn't seem to add any tension for the return game as far as the 50,000-plus fans who crammed into the Tianhe Stadium, surrounded by skyscrapers in China's third biggest city, were concerned. The "Red Army" never stopped bouncing, singing and chanting as they cheered on their heroes.

If the occasion in the first leg and 9,000 fans got to Al Ahli, the thought of almost six times that amount must have been scary. But the men from Dubai were better in southern China with Lima and Khalil carrying some threat on the break. Even so, Guangzhou Evergrande made most of the running and it was a piece of magic from another Brazilian that finally made the difference, with Elkeson flicking the ball around his marker in the area and then firing home a low shot.

The triumph was another return on a five-year

investment of more than $150m put in by Evergrande, a wealthy property developer who took over the club in 2010.

The 2013 Asian title had come with Marcello Lippi at the helm and had been a thrilling affair, with 22 goals scored in eight knockout games, the strings being pulled by Argentinian Dario Conca. While Scolari's side managed just 10 goals, he could still afford to bring in Robinho during the summer and not even register the former Real Madrid striker for the continental tournament.

There are bigger fish for Scolari to fry at the Club World Cup. Lippi took fourth place in 2013 and Scolari will want to do better than that, so he – and the club – will take it very seriously indeed.

Winning in Asia is a pre-requisite but in itself not enough. Global success is seen as the key to becoming the first Asian club to enjoy a global profile. WS

Following...fans of the Chinese club in Dubai for the first leg

the Costa Rican Cup, beating Herediano in the Final on penalties.

ENGLAND: Jamie Vardy equals Ruud Van Nistelrooy's record of scoring in 10 consecutive Premier League games as Leicester City win 3-0 at Newcastle United to go top of the table. Previous leaders Manchester City lose 4-1 at home to Liverpool.

FRANCE: Playing for the first time since the attacks in the capital, Paris Saint-Germain stretch their lead in Ligue 1 to 13 points with a 2-1 victory away to Lorient.

GAMBIA: League champions Gamtel beat cup winners Wallidan on penalties in the Super Cup.

GERMANY: Bayern Munich open an eight-point lead with a 3-1 win at Schalke, while Wolfsburg beat Werder Bremen 6-0. Augsburg climb off the bottom of the table with a 4-0 win at Stuttgart. The Rhine derby finishes goalless as Mainz draw at Cologne.

GREECE: The derby between Panathinaikos and Olympiakos is abandoned before kick-off because of crowd disturbances.

ITALY: Juventus beat Milan 1-0, while Roma are held 2-2 at Bologna and miss out on top spot.

KAZAKHSTAN: Astana are denied a domestic double as holders Kairat Almaty win the Kazakh Cup Final 2-1.

RUSSIA: Premier League leaders CSKA Moscow lose 2-0 at home to struggling Samara.

SPAIN: Barcelona open up a six-point lead with a 4-0 victory over Real Madrid at the Bernabeu and bring to an end keeper Keylor Navas' club record of 885 minutes without conceding a goal.

TUNISIA: Ammar Jemal scores three minutes from time in South Africa to give Etoile Sahel a 1-1 draw in the first leg of the CAF Confederation Cup Final against Orlando Pirates.

Sunday November 22

CHINA: Jiangsu Guoxin-Sainty and Shanghai Shenhua draw 0-0 in the first leg of the Chinese FA Cup Final.

ENGLAND: Tottenham Hotspur beat West Ham United 4-1 to equal a club record of 12 league games unbeaten.

FRANCE: In a game postponed from Saturday because of strong winds, GFC Ajaccio win 2-1 at Bastia in the Corsican derby.

HOLLAND: Twente striker Tim Hoelscher is sent off less than a minute after coming on as a sub in the 5-0 defeat at Feyenoord.

ITALY: Napoli go top with a 2-0 win at Verona before being replaced later in the day by Internazionale, who beat Frosinone 4-0.

NORWAY: Rosenborg wrap up the domestic double with a 2-0 ➤

win over Sarpsborg in the Cup Final. **USA:** Justin Meram's goal after nine seconds is the fastest in play-off history as Columbus Crew beat New York Red Bulls 2-0 in the first leg of the Eastern Conference Final.

Monday November 23

DENMARK: Former Swansea City boss Michael Laudrup turns down an offer to become Denmark coach. **TURKEY:** Galatasaray appoint Mustafa Denizli as coach, although caretaker Claudio Taffarel will be in charge against Atletico Madrid in the Champions League on Wednesday.

Tuesday November 24

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: Barcelona and Bayern Munich beat Roma (6-1) and Oympiakos (4-0) respectively to reach the last 16 of the tournament, where they join Zenit, whose 2-0 victory over Valencia sees them maintain the only 100 per cent record in the group stage.

Wednesday November 25

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: Atletico Madrid, Benfica, Juventus and Paris Saint-Germain secure their places in the last 16 of the tournament. **UKRAINE:** Dynamo Kiev will play their next two European home games in an empty stadium after racist attacks on fans during a Champions League game against Chelsea in October. The sanction of a third closed-door match has been suspended for three years. WS

Nigeria

OLUWASHINA OKELEJI

'Golden Eaglets' claim fifth title

Nigeria win World Under-17 Cup in Chile

Nigeria became the first country to win the Under-17 World Cup five times and only the second to successfully defend the title. Yet they achieved their success in Chile despite a vociferous media campaign against coach Emmanuel Amunike and the all-too-familiar administrative neglect.

When the team landed in Chile they lacked enough funds to cover their daily allowances and bonuses. Add in the non-payment of coaches' salaries and a lack of match and training kit, and it's easy to see just how difficult it was for Amunike's side.

Having only just qualified for the finals after finishing fourth in the African championship, few expected Nigeria to progress further than the group stage. Some newspapers even called for a change of coach, players or both "before they embarrass us in Chile".

Amunike, however, remained focused, explaining: "There's no point reacting to negativity off-the-pitch when you can use your energy positively to reach your goals. As a former-player-turned-coach, my job is to ensure my boys deliver on the pitch no matter the circumstances."

And how they performed their roles to perfection, with a combination of the players' attacking flair and the tactical discipline employed by their under-fire coach.

They opened their campaign with a 2-0 win over USA, then hammered hosts Chile 5-1 before losing 2-1 to Croatia in the final group game. Australia were beaten 6-0 in the round of 16 before handing pre-tournament favourites Brazil were seen off 3-0 in the quarter-finals.

They reached the Final with a thrilling 4-2 victory over Mexico but saved their best for last, finishing with a 2-0 win over West African rivals Mali in Vina del Mar.

Having also won in 1985, 1993, 2007 and 2013, the question remains as to why Nigeria do not repeat their success at under-17 level on the bigger stage.

"These young boys succeed because of a passion and desire to excel, knowing they will earn a move to Europe. But what happens after that?" asks Amunike. "We must address a lot of things to reach the top at senior level." WS

Silverware...Nigeria's under-17s are crowned world champions in Chile

Winner...Nigeria's Lukman Zakari (left) takes on Mali in the Final

THE STARS

The biggest star in Chile was Golden Boot and Silver Ball winner Victor Osimhen. His 10 goals eclipsed the previous best-mark of nine set by Ivorian Souleymane Coulibaly in 2011 and Florent Sinama Pongolle of France in 2001. Captain Kelechi Nwakali, who ran the engine room of the Eaglets, won the Golden Ball as the tournament's "most valuable player". Omitted from the 2013 finals, he joins his brother Chidiebere, who won in 2013, as the first siblings to win the title in consecutive editions.

ESM XI

EUROPEAN SPORTS MEDIA

OCTOBER 2015

HOW IT WORKS

Every month, journalists from each member of the European Sports Media group select their first XI based on the best individual performances from Europe's top competitions. For details of how each ESM member voted, visit worldsoccer.com/esm11

SEASON RANKINGS

Cumulative votes through the season

GOALKEEPERS

Keylor NAVAS (Real Madrid)	21 votes
Gianluigi BUFFON (Juventus)	1
Petr CECH (Arsenal)	1
Ralf FAHRMANN (Schalke)	1
Joe HART (Manchester City)	1
Fernando MUSLERA (Galatasaray)	1
Manuel NEUER (Bayern Munich)	1
Hakon OPDAL (Start)	1

DEFENDERS

MARCELO (Real Madrid)	15
Philipp LAHM (Bayern Munich)	6
Nicolas OTAMENDI (Manchester City)	6
Jerome BOATENG (Bayern Munich)	5
Mats HUMMELS (Borussia Dortmund)	5
Serge AURIER (Paris Saint-Germain)	4
David ALABA (Bayern Munich)	4
Hector BELLERIN (Arsenal)	4
Alessandro FLORENZI (Roma)	4
Matthias GINTER (Borussia Dortmund)	4
Raphael VARANE (Real Madrid)	4
Matteo DARMIAN (Manchester United)	3
Laurent KOSCIELNY (Arsenal)	3
Jeison MURILLO (Internazionale)	3
Victor RUIZ (Villarreal)	3
Thiago SILVA (Paris Saint-Germain)	3
Raul ALBIOL (Napoli)	2
Toby ALDERWEIRELD (Tottenham Hotspur)	2
Diego GODIN (Atletico Madrid)	2
MAXWELL (Paris Saint-Germain)	2
Sergio RAMOS (Real Madrid)	2
Chris SMALLING (Manchester United)	2
Davide ASTORI (Fiorentina)	1
Juan BERNAT (Bayern Munich)	1
Alberto BOTIA (Olympiakos)	1
DANILO (Real Madrid)	1
Roderic FILIPPI (GFC Ajaccio)	1
Christophe JALLET (Lyon)	1
Vincent KOMPANY (Manchester City)	1
Kalidou KOULIBALY (Napoli)	1
MAICON (Roma)	1
MAURICIO (Lazio)	1
Nacho MONREAL (Arsenal)	1
NALDO (Wolfsburg)	1
Gerard PIQUE (Barcelona)	1
Winston REID (West Ham United)	1
Gonzalo RODRIGUEZ (Fiorentina)	1
Bacary SAGNA (Manchester City)	1
Nelson SEMEDO (Benfica)	1
Sergi ROBERTO (Barcelona)	1
Aytac SULU (Darmstadt)	1
Oscar WENDT (Borussia Monchengladbach)	1
Kurt ZOUMA (Chelsea)	1

MIDFIELDERS

Douglas COSTA (Bayern Munich)	9
Kevin DE BRUYNE (Manchester City)	9
Mesut OZIL (Arsenal)	7
Thomas MULLER (Bayern Munich)	6
Angel DI MARIA (Paris Saint-Germain)	5
CASEMIRO (Real Madrid)	4
Hakan CALHANOGLU (Bayer Leverkusen)	3
Julian WEIGL (Borussia Dortmund)	3
Francis COQUELIN (Arsenal)	2
Riyad MAHREZ (Leicester City)	2
Gary MEDEL (Internazionale)	2
Felipe MELO (Internazionale)	2
Henrykh MKHITARYAN (Borussia Dortmund)	2
Dmitri PAYET (West Ham United)	2
Miralem PJANIC (Roma)	2
Ivan RAKITIC (Barcelona)	2
Xabi ALONSO (Bayern Munich)	1
Felipe ANDERSON (Lazio)	1
Karim BELLARABI (Bayer Leverkusen)	1
Santi CAZORLA (Arsenal)	1
Lassana DIARRA (Marseille)	1
Matias FERNANDEZ (Fiorentina)	1
Nicolas GAITAN (Benfica)	1
Fredy GUARIN (Internazionale)	1
Yevhen KONOPLYANKA (Sevilla)	1
Juan MATA (Manchester United)	1
Blaise MATUIDI (Paris Saint-Germain)	1
Paul POGBA (Juventus)	1
Marco REUS (Borussia Dortmund)	1
Bryan RUIZ (Sporting Lisbon)	1
David SILVA (Manchester City)	1
Marc STENDERA (Eintracht Frankfurt)	1
THIAGO Alcantara (Bayern Munich)	1
TIAGO (Atletico Madrid)	1
Yaya TOURE (Manchester City)	1
Borja VALERO (Fiorentina)	1
Daniel WASS (Celta Vigo)	1
Georginio WIJNALDUM (Newcastle United)	1

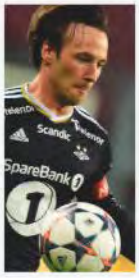
FORWARDS

Robert LEWANDOWSKI (Bayern Munich)	18
Pierre-Emerick AUBAMEYANG (Borussia Dortmund)	14
NEYMAR (Barcelona)	9
Luis SUAREZ (Barcelona)	7
Anthony MARTIAL (Manchester United)	6
NOLITO (Celta Vigo)	6
Cristiano RONALDO (Real Madrid)	5
Jamie VARDY (Leicester City)	4
Gonzalo HIGUAIN (Napoli)	3
Karim BENZEMA (Real Madrid)	2
Antoine GRIEZMANN (Atletico Madrid)	2
Lionel MESSI (Barcelona)	2
Hatem BEN ARFA (Nice)	1
Kevin GAMEIRO (Sevilla)	1
Rudy GESTEDE (Aston Villa)	1
Olivier GIROUD (Arsenal)	1
Zlatan IBRAHIMOVIC (Paris Saint-Germain)	1
Lorenzo INSIGNE (Napoli)	1
Dirk KUYT (Feyenoord)	1
Alex TEIXEIRA (Shakhtar Donetsk)	1

ESM – EUROPEAN SPORTS MEDIA

The members of ESM are: *A Bola* (Portugal), *Elf* (Holland), *Fanatik* (Turkey), *Frankfurter Allegmeine Zeitung* (Germany), *Goal News* (Greece), *Kicker* (Germany), *Marca* (Spain), *Nemzeti Sport* (Hungary), *So Foot* (France), *Sport* (Belgium), *Sport Express* (Russia), *De Telegraaf* (Holland), *TIPSbladet* (Denmark), *World Soccer* (England). More details of votes at **worldsoccer.com/votes**

	HOW THE LEAGUE WAS WON	CUP WINNERS	WHO QUALIFIED FOR EUROPE
Belarus PREMIER LEAGUE *by Oleg Zadernovsky*	BATE confirmed their domestic superiority with a 10th successive title, finishing 12 points clear of second-place Dinamo Minsk. The return of 34-year-old midfielder Alexander Hleb in June was a great motivation for his team-mates, while Serbian defender Nemanja Milunovic and midfielder Alyaksandr Karnitsky also played key roles.	Played in the city of Gomel for the first time, **BATE** won the Final with a 4-1 victory over Shakhtyor Soligorsk at the Centralny Stadium in front of 9,100 spectators. It was BATE's third cup win, following triumphs in 2006 and 2010.	Double-winners BATE will enter the Champions League in the second qualifying round, while Dinamo Minsk and Shakhtyor Soligorsk go into the Europa League.
Estonia MEISTRILIIGA *by Andres Must*	**Flora** (pictured) moved ahead of Levadia with a record 10th championship, despite taking just one point from a possible 12 in their first four meetings with closest challengers Levadia and Nomme Kalju.	Nomme Kalju claimed their first Estonian Cup, beating minnows Paide Linnameeskond 2-0 in the Final with goals from Artjom Dmitrijev and Allan Kimbaloula.	Flora enter the Champions League qualifiers, while Levadia and Nomme Kalju go into the Europa League.
Finland VEIKKAUSLIIGA *by Egan Richardson*	HJK Helsinki had won the title in each of the six years up to 2014, but this year their stranglehold on the championship was finally broken. Nouveau riche SJK Seinajoki were the winners of a bruising title race that ended with RoPS Rovaniemi and HJK still in with a shout on the final day, before SJK won at home to seal their victory.	The Finnish Cup saw unlikely, first-time winners, as **IFK Mariehamn** won a competition they often haven't bothered to enter due to travel costs from their island base of Aland off the south-west coast. They beat Inter Turku 2-1 in the Final.	IFK take one of the Europa League spots, with the other two going to RoPS Rovaniemi for finishing second and HJK for taking third. SJK will have a new ground next year, but it's unclear if it will be ready in time for the Champions League qualifiers.
Norway ELITESERIEN *by Sigurd Odegaard*	Having been overtaken by Molde after years as the dominant domestic force in Norwegian club football, **Rosenborg** reclaimed their place at the top, leading the campaign from the start. Stromsgodset were second, with Stabaek in third place.	Rosenborg beat Sarpsborg 2-0 in a packed Ullevaal stadium in mid-November to win the Cup Final. Pal Andre Helland and Mike Jensen scored the goals and Rosenborg were in control throughout.	Double winners Rosenborg will enter the qualifying round of the Champions League, while Stabaek and Stromsgodset go into the Europa League preliminary rounds.
Republic of Ireland PREMIER DIVISION *by Sean Creedon*	Dundalk, who were the first club from outside Dublin to win the championship, in 1933, and this year won back-to-back titles for the first time in their history. They lost only one league game and scored a record 78 goals in 33 games. Cork City finished runners-up for the second year in a row.	**Dundalk** won their third double when they beat Cork City 1-0 after extra time in the FAI Cup Final at the Aviva Stadium. The winning goal came in the 107th minute when Richie Towell finished off a great run by Daryl Horgan. PHOTO: INPHO	Cork City and Dundalk qualifying for the FAI Final was good news for fourth-placed St Patrick's Athletic, who now join Cork and third-placed Shamrock Rovers in the Europa League qualifiers next season. Bohemians made a late push for fourth, but the Saints just held off the Gypsies' challenge.
Sweden ALLSVENSKAN *by Sasa Ibrulj*	The Allsvenskan is usually one of the most even leagues in Europe, but this year's title race was more exciting than ever. After two consecutive titles, Malmo could only finish fifth, while three teams were still in the race on the final day. In the end, Norrkoping won the title three points ahead of Gothenburg and five ahead of AIK.	The cup format was changed three years ago, introducing a group stage and moving the Final to May. IFK Gothenburg will defend their trophy when the group stage begins on February 20.	Norrkoping will play in the Champions League for the first time, starting with the second qualifying round. **Gothenburg** (in stripes) will play in the Europa League with AIK. The fourth team will be decided after the Cup Final on May 5.

RELEGATED/PROMOTED	PLAYER OF THE SEASON	COACH OF THE SEASON	NEWCOMER OF THE SEASON
Gomel, who finished three points adrift at the bottom of the league, will be replaced by second-tier champions Isloch Minsk Raion. Also promoted are Gorodeya and Krumkachy Minsk as the top flight expands from 14 to 16 teams.	Shakhtyor Soligorsk's 31-year-old striker **Mikalay Yanush** was the league's top scorer with 15 goals. That form earned him a belated promotion to the national set-up and he made his international debut in March, against Gabon.	A holding midfielder with the club for 10 seasons, Alyaksandr Yermakovich took over as coach in October 2013 following Viktor Goncharenko's departure and has since guided BATE to the league, cup and two Belarus Super Cups.	Montenegro midfielder **Fatos Beciraj** (in white) joined Dinamo Minsk from Changchun Yatai of China in January and was impressive throughout the campaign, scoring nine and adding eight assists.
Viljandi Tulevik (in red) were relegated and replaced by Rakvere Tarvas, who join the top flight for the first time. Tartu Tammeka retained their place after beating Tallinna Kalev 4-2 on aggregate in a play-off.	Levadia's 32-year-old Ingemar Teever was the league's top scorer with 24 goals. However, at the end of the season he announced that it will probably have been his last season.	Still only 32, **Norbert Hurt** replaced Marko Lelov in 2013 and led Flora to a 10th title in the season in which they celebrated the 25th anniversary of the club's formation.	At 19, striker Rauno Sappinen is a fine example of Flora's successful youth policy, having helped his side win the league and opening the door to the national team.
FF Jaro finished bottom and were relegated automatically. They were joined by KTP Kotka, who were second bottom but lost a play-off with PK-35 Vantaa, who had finished runners-up in the second tier. PS Kemi were promoted automatically – but all these divisional changes are subject to the vagaries of the FA's licensing committee.	Aleksandr "Boris" Kokko won the players' player of the year award after scoring 17 goals for RoPS. HJK's Japanese playmaker Atomu Tanaka won the newspapers' award, which is based on a collation of player ratings throughout the season.	SJK's **Simo Valakari** was the stand-out candidate after building a compact and tireless team that can out-work and out-think their domestic rivals.	The newcomer of the season were HIFK Helsinki. A low-budget outfit with a big history and passionate fans, they brought big-time derbies to the Finnish capital for the first time in decades. They drew all three games with HJK in front of sell-out crowds and finished comfortably clear of relegation.
Both of the previous season's promoted sides, Sandefjord and Mjondalen, were relegated, while Start beat neighbours Jerv 4-2 in two play-off games to secure survival in the elite division.	Rosenborg's **Pal Andre Helland** scored some important goals and, despite periods out injured, he played an influential part in the title-winning season. 	Former Manchester City midfielder Kare Ingebrigtsen stamped his mark on the Rosenborg way of play from the very start and demonstrated his quality as a coach.	Rosenborg's 21-year-old midfielder Ole Kristian Selnes has developed into a driving force, threading passes through to the strikers, and is set to become a mainstay in the national team in the years ahead.
Former Irish international Mark Kinsella's coaching skills couldn't save Drogheda United, who were automatically relegated. They were joined in the drop by UCD, who lost a play-off to Finn Harps. Harps then beat Limerick from the second level to clinch promotion. Wexford Youths, who wear a pink strip, were automatically promoted.	It was a great year for 24-year-old midfielder Richie Towell. Top scorer in the league with 25 goals, he capped it off by scoring the only goal in the Cup Final. He joined Celtic from Dublin club Crumlin United, but most of his Scottish football was played while on loan to Hibernian. Joined Dundalk in December 2012.	After leading Dundalk to back-to-back titles and a domestic double, there is no doubt that 44-year-old **Stephen Kenny** deserves to be named coach of the season. He has also won trophies with former clubs Longford Town, Bohemians and Derry City.	Brandon Miele had a great first season with Shamrock Rovers, scoring 11 league goals. He left Dublin schoolboy club Cherry Orchard for Newcastle United, but was released after three years. After a short spell with non-league Bluebell United, the 21-year-old midfielder joined The Hoops, who play in his native Tallaght.
Atvidaberg were bottom for most of the campaign, and with their money troubles relegation was expected. Four-time champions Halmstad also went down. Jonkopings Sodra IF won the Superettan title and join the top flight for the first time since 1969. The other newcomer is Ostersund, a club formed just 19 years ago.	**Emir Kujovic** struggled with injury after his return from Turkey in 2013, playing only 21 matches in two seasons for Norrkoping. But, this year the 27-year-old scored 21 goals in 29 matches and earned his first call-up in to the Sweden squad.	After winning the title with almost the same team that had been in a relegation battle the previous season, it must be Janne Andersson of Norrkoping. The 53-year-old has been at the club since 2011 having previously worked at Halmstad and a couple of lower league clubs. This year's Allsvenskan passed without a single coaching change.	When he moved to Djurgarden last summer, 21-year-old midfielder Kerim Mrabti had played most of his career in the third tier of Swedish football. However, this season he became a regular starter and was a key performer for his mid-table team.

Internationals

2018 WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

SOUTH AMERICA section

● *4.5 finals places available*

Nov12 - La Paz
Bolivia 4 (Ramallo 19, 45+1, Arce pen 23, Cardozo 49)
Venezuela 2 (M Rondon 32, Blanco 55)
HT: 3-1. **Ref:** Carrillo (Per)
Bolivia: D Vaca - Saavedra, Zenteno, Martelli, L Morales, Cardozo, Chumacero, Veizaga, Lizio (Duk 78), Arce (Eguino 86), Ramallo (Arrascaita 58).
Venezuela: Baroja - Vargas (Falcon 65), Angel (Velazquez 50), Lucena, Acosta, A Gonzalez, Figuera (Carabali 46), Rincon, Seijas, Blanco, M Rondon. *Sent off: Seijas 90+3.*

Nov12 - Santiago
Chile 1 (Vidal 45)
Colombia 1 (Rodriguez 68)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Caceres (Par)
Chile: Bravo - Isla, G Medel, Silva (Rabello 89), Jara, Vidal, Fernandez, Valdivia (Orellana 79), Beausejour, Sanchez, Vargas (Pinilla 85).
Colombia: Ospina - Arias, Zapata, Murillo, Fabra, Sanchez (Cardona 56), Mejia, D Torres, Rodriguez, Martinez (Pardo 85), Muriel (Bacca 71).

Nov12 - Quito
Ecuador 2 (Caicedo 22, Martinez 59)
Uruguay 1 (Cavani 49)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Marques (Bra)
Ecuador: Dominguez - Paredes, Erazo, Achilier, W Ayovi, Noboa, Quinonez (A Bolanos 46), Montero (Mena 90), Martinez, Caicedo, M Bolanos (Cazares 83).
Uruguay: Muslera - M Pereira, Godin, Coates, Caceres, Gonzalez (A Pereira 88), Arevalo, Sanchez, Lodeiro (Rolan 62), Hernandez (Santos 85), Cavani.

Nov13 - Buenos Aires
Argentina 1 (Lavezzi 34)
Brazil 1 (Lucas Lima 58)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Arias (Par)
Argentina: Romero - Roncaglia, Otamendi, Funes Mori, Rojo, Biglia, Mascherano, Banega (Lamela 81), Di Maria, Higuain (Dybala 81), Lavezzi (Gaitan 70).
Brazil: Alisson - Daniel Alves, Miranda, David Luiz, Filipe Luis, Elias, Luiz Gustavo, Willian (Gil 90), Lucas Lima (Renato Augusto 64), Neymar, Ricardo Oliveira (Douglas Costa 57). *Sent off: David Luiz 88.*

Nov13 - Lima
Peru 1 (Farfan 20)
Paraguay 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Bascunan (Chl)
Peru: Penny - Advincula, Zambrano, Ascues, Yotun, Lobaton, Tapia (Ballon 74), Reyna (C Gonzales 90+3), Farfan, Pizarro (Hurtado 84), Guerrero.
Paraguay: A Silva - Piris, Da Silva, Aguilar, Samudio, V Caceres (Bobadilla 59), R Ortiz (Santana 80), Villalba, Gonzalez, Haedo Valdez (E Benitez 59), Lezcano.

Nov17 - Salvador
Brazil 3 (Douglas Costa 21, Renato Augusto 57, Filipe Luis 76)
Peru 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Buitrago (Col)
Brazil: Alisson - Daniel Alves, Miranda, Gil, Filipe Luis, Luiz Gustavo (Fernandinho 77), Elias, Willian (Oscar 84), Renato Augusto, Douglas Costa (Lucas Lima 88), Neymar.
Peru: Penny - Advincula, Zambrano, Ascues, Yotun, Tapia (Ballon 69), Lobaton (C Gonzales 69), Cueva, Hurtado (Reyna 64), Farfan, Guerrero.

Nov17 - Barranquilla
Colombia 0
Argentina 1 (Biglia 20)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Vera (Ecu)
Colombia: Ospina - Palacios, Zapata, Murillo, Fabra, D Torres, Mejia (Ramos 77), M Torres (Muriel 46), Rodriguez, Gutierrez (Cardona 57), Bacca.
Argentina: Romero - Mercado (Peruzzi 79), Otamendi, Funes Mori, Rojo, Di Maria, Biglia, Mascherano, Banega, Lavezzi (Perez 86), Higuain (Dybala 70).

Nov17 - Asuncion
Paraguay 2 (Lezcano 61, Barrios 64)
Bolivia 1 (Duk 59)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Argote (Ven)
Paraguay: A Silva - B Valdez, Da Silva, Aguilar, Samudio, C Ortiz (Romero 60), Rojas, Gonzalez (Perez 76) E Benitez (Santana 71), Lezcano, Barrios. *Sent off: Aguilar 85.*
Bolivia: D Vaca - Martelli, Zenteno, Eguino, Flores, Diego Bejarano (Saavedra 52), Veizaga, Chumacero, Danny Bejarano, Campos (Lizio 24), Ramallo (Duk 46).

Nov17 - Montevideo
Uruguay 3 (Godin 22, A Pereira 61, Caceres 64)
Chile 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Roldan (Col)
Uruguay: Muslera - M Pereira, Godin, Coates, Caceres (G Silva 70), Arevalo, Corujo, Sanchez, Lodeiro (A Pereira 58), Rolan (Nandez 79), Cavani.
Chile: Bravo - Isla, G Medel, Jara, Mena (Fernandez 67), Diaz, Vidal, M Gonzalez (Beausejour 67), Valdivia, Vargas (Orellana 81), Sanchez. *Sent off: Valdivia (after final whistle).*

Nov17 - Puerto Ordaz
Venezuela 1 (Martinez 84)
Ecuador 3 (Martinez 15, Montero 23, Caicedo 60)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Vargas (Bol)
Venezuela: Baroja - Rosales, Vizcarrondo, Velazquez, Cichero, Rincon, Lucena (Acosta 46), Suarez (Martinez 54), Otero, Santos (M Rondon 68), S Rondon.
Ecuador: Dreer - Paredes, Guagua, Erazo, W Ayovi, Quinonez (Castillo 70), Noboa, Martinez, Montero (Cazares 75), M Bolanos, Caicedo (J Ayovi 82).

2018 WC QUALS – SOUTH AMERICA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ecuador	4	4	0	0	9	2	12
Uruguay	4	3	0	1	9	2	9
Brazil	4	2	1	1	7	4	7
Paraguay	4	2	1	1	3	2	7
Chile	4	2	1	1	7	7	7
Argentina	4	1	2	1	2	3	5
Colombia	4	1	1	2	3	5	4
Bolivia	4	1	0	3	5	8	3
Peru	4	1	0	3	4	9	3
Venezuela	4	0	0	4	4	11	0

Each team will play 18 games, 9x2; games to be completed by Oct 2017

● *The top 4 will qualify for the finals; the 5th-placed country will meet the Oceania play-off round winner in a play-off for a place in the finals*

ASIA section

● *4.5 finals places available*

2nd round

Group A

Nov 9 - Amman, Jordan
Palestine 0
Saudi Arabia 0
Ref: Makhadmeh (Jor)

Nov12 - Amman, Jordan
Palestine 6 (Cantillana 37, Abu Nahyeh 39, 45, 58, Seyam 88, Ihbeisheh 90+1)
Malaysia 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Al Kaf (Oma)

Nov12 - Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates 8 (Mabkhout 15, 21, Khalil 43, pen 53, 56, 58, Dawood Ali 54, Al Attas 87)
East Timor 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Torki (Irn)

Nov17 - Dili
East Timor 0
Saudi Arabia 10 (Al Sahlawi pen 30, 42, pen 55, 70, 88, Osama Hawsawi 34, Al Shehri 35, Al Jassam 85, Hazazi 90, Al Muwallad 90+2)
HT: 0-4. **Ref:** Milliner (Aus)
Sent off: Adelino (East Timor) 87

Nov17 - Shah Alam
Malaysia 1 (Baddrol 59)
United Arab Emirates 2 (O Abdulrahman 22, Khalil 52)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Toma (Jap)

2018 WC QUALS – ASIA – 2ND ROUND: GP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Saudi Arabia	6	5	1	0	25	3	16
UAE	6	4	1	1	22	3	13
Palestine	6	2	3	1	15	4	9
Malaysia	7	1	1	5	3	28	4
East Timor	7	0	2	5	2	29	2

Group B

Nov12 - Canberra
Australia 3 (Jedinak pen 40, Cahill 50, I Amirov og 69)
Kyrgyzstan 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Kim Sang-woo (SKo)
Australia: Federici - Sainsbury, Wright, McGowan, Meredith, Jedinak (Rogic 61), Luongo, Milligan, Mooy, Cahill, Juric (Burns 29; Troisi 73).

Nov12 - Dushanbe
Tajikistan 5 (M Dzhalilov 16, 26, 59, 74, Nazarov pen 51)
Bangladesh 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Al Qaysi (Irq)

Nov17 - Dhaka
Bangladesh 0
Australia 4 (Cahill 6, 32, 37, Jedinak 45)
HT: 0-4. **Ref:** Wang Di (Chn)
Australia: Federici - Risdon, Wright, Wilkinson, Meredith (Davidson 57), Jedinak, Luongo (Troisi 46), McKay, Mooy (Oar 46), Cahill, Burns.

Nov17 - Bishkek
Kyrgyzstan 1 (Zemlianukhin 48)
Jordan 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Kurbanov (Tkm)

2018 WC QUALS – ASIA – 2ND ROUND: GP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Australia	6	5	0	1	17	3	15
Jordan	6	4	1	1	12	2	13
Kyrgyzstan	7	3	2	2	9	8	11
Tajikistan	6	1	2	3	9	12	5
Bangladesh	7	0	1	6	2	24	1

Group C

Nov12 - Changsha
China 12 (Mei Fang 10, Yang Xu 13, pen 21, 37, 51, Yu Dabao 16, 39, Yu Hanchao 34, 72, Wang Yongpo 66, 81, Zhang Xizhe 88)
Bhutan 0
HT: 7-0. **Ref:** Al Awaji (Sau)

Nov12 - Male
Maldives 0
Hong Kong 1 (Paulinho pen 13)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Al Jeneibi (UAE)

Nov17 - Thimphu
Bhutan 0
Qatar 3 (Muntari 22, Al Haidos 36, 90)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Tantashev (Uzb)

Nov17 - Hong Kong
Hong Kong 0
China 0
Ref: Shukralla (Bhn)

2018 WC QUALS – ASIA – 2ND ROUND: GP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Qatar (Q)	6	6	0	0	27	2	18
Hong Kong	7	4	2	1	13	3	14
China	6	3	2	1	21	1	11
Maldives	6	1	0	5	4	14	3
Bhutan	7	0	0	7	3	48	0

Group D

Nov12 - Bangalore
India 1 (R Singh 10)
Guam 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Gillett (Aus)
Sent off: S Singh (India) 43

Nov12 - Tehran
Iran 3 (Pouraliganji 6, Ezatolahi 64, Dejagah pen 83)
Turkmenistan 1 (Saparov 62)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Kim Dong-jin (SKo)
Iran: A Haghighi - Hajsafi, Pouraliganji, Pourghaz, Rezaeian, Torabi, Ezatolahi (Kamyabinia 81), O Ebrahimi, Amiri (Jahanbakhsh 46), Dejagah, K Rezaei (Ghoochannejhad 75).

Nov17 - Dededo
Guam 0
Iran 6 (Taremi 12, 63, Kamyabinia 31, Rezaeian 49, Shojaei pen 51, Ansarifard 53)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Ho (HK)
Sent off: Matkin (Guam) 50; Beiranvand (Iran) 72
Iran: Beiranvand - Rezaeian, Kamyabinia, Mohammadi, Pourghaz, Torabi (Shojaei 43), Dejagah (Jahanbakhsh 58), Pouraliganji, Teymourian, Taremi (Heydari 71), Ansarifard.

Nov17 - Ashgabat
Turkmenistan 2 (Gevorkyan 40, Muhadov 67)
Oman 1 (Al Ghassani 70)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Ma (Chn)

2018 WC QUALS – ASIA – 2ND ROUND: GP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iran	6	4	2	0	20	3	14
Oman	6	3	2	1	10	5	11
Turkmenistan	7	3	1	3	8	10	10
Guam	7	2	1	4	3	15	7
India	6	1	0	5	4	12	3

Group E

Nov12 - Tehran, Iran
Afghanistan 3 (Zazai 42, N Amiri 78, Amani 90+4)
Cambodia 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Makhadmeh (Jor)

Nov12 - Singapore
Singapore 0
Japan 3 (Kanazaki 20, Honda 26, Yoshida 88)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Al Mirdasi (Sau)
Japan: Nishikawa - Nagatomo, Morishige, H Sakai, Yoshida, Honda (Haraguchi 82), Kashiwagi, Kiyotake (Kagawa 75), Hasebe, Muto (Usami 70), Kanazaki.

Nov17 - Phnom Penh
Cambodia 0
Japan 2 (Laboravy og 51, Honda 90)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Fu (Chn)
Japan: Nishikawa - Makino, Yoshida, Nagatomo, Endo (Kashiwagi 47), Fujiharu, Kagawa, Haraguchi, Yamaguchi, Okazaki (Minamino 86), Usami (Honda 62).

Nov17 - Singapore
Singapore 1 (Safuwan pen 89)
Syria 2 (Khribin 20, 90+2)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Kim Jong-hyeok (SKo)
Sent off: Madhu (Singapore) 55

2018 WC QUALS – ASIA – 2ND ROUND: GP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Japan	6	5	1	0	17	0	16
Syria	6	5	0	1	20	6	15
Singapore	7	3	1	3	8	7	10
Afghanistan	6	2	0	4	6	18	6
Cambodia	7	0	0	7	1	21	0

Group F

Nov12 - Bangkok
Thailand 4 (Teerasil 41, Pokklaw 52, Adisak 72, Tana 74)
Taiwan 2 (Yaki Yen 3, Hung Kai-chun 65)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Mashentsev (Kyr)

Nov17 - Kaohsiung
Taiwan 0
Iraq 2 (Ismail 19, Mahmoud 85)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Iida (Jap)

2018 WC QUALS – ASIA – 2ND ROUND: GP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Thailand	5	4	1	0	12	4	13
Iraq	4	2	2	0	10	4	8
Vietnam	4	1	1	2	3	6	4
Taiwan	5	0	0	5	4	15	0

Indonesia excluded after FA was suspended by FIFA for government interference

Group G

Nov12 - Beirut
Lebanon 7 (Y Mohamad 27, Antar 34, Chaito 36, 90+3, Hamam 42, Maatouk 59, Oumari 90)
Laos 0
HT: 4-0. **Ref:** Pu-Udom (Tha)

Nov12 - Suwon
South Korea 4 (Lee Jae-sung 18, Koo Ja-cheol 30, Jang Hyun-soo 82, Nam Tae-hee 86)
Myanmar 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Al Marri (Qat)
South Korea: Kim Seung-gyu - Kwak Tae-hwi, Kim Young-gwon, Kim Jin-su, Jang Hyun-soo, Koo Ja-cheol (Nam Tae-hee 77), Ki Sung-yueng, Lee Jae-sung (Suk Hyun-jun 86), Jung Woo-young, Ji Dong-won, Hwang Ui-jo (Son Heung-min 63).

Nov17 - Vientiane
Laos 0
South Korea 5 (Ki Sung-yueng pen 3, 33, Son Heung-min 35, 67, Suk Hyun-jun 43)
HT: 0-4. **Ref:** Al Khudair (Sau)
South Korea: Kwoun Sun-tae - Kwak Tae-hwi, Kim Kee-hee (Yun Young-sun 86), Kim Chang-soo, Park Joo-ho, Ki Sung-yueng, Nam Tae-hee (Kim Young-gwon 76), Son Heung-min, Lee Jae-sung, Han Kook-young, Suk Hyun-jun (Lee Chung-yong 62).

2018 WC QUALS – ASIA – 2ND ROUND: GP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Korea	6	6	0	0	23	0	18
Kuwait	5	3	1	1	12	1	10
Lebanon	6	3	1	2	11	4	10
Myanmar	6	1	1	4	5	20	4
Laos	7	0	1	6	3	29	1

Group H

Nov12 - Manila
Philippines 0
Yemen 1 (A Al Sarori 83)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Kim Hee-gon (SKo)

Nov12 - Tashkent
Uzbekistan 3 (Sergeev 24, Geynrikh 66, Ahmedov 87)
North Korea 1 (Ri Hyok-chol 2)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Faghani (Irn)

Nov17 - Pyongyang
North Korea 2 (Pak Kwang-ryong pen 45+1, Jong Il-gwan 90+3)
Bahrain 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Bin Jahari (Sin)

Nov17 - Doha, Qatar
Yemen 1 (A Al Sarori 90+2)
Uzbekistan 3 (Haydarov 7, Djeparov 31, Andreev 50)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Al Hilali (Oma)

2018 WC QUALS – ASIA – 2ND ROUND: GP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
North Korea	7	5	1	1	12	5	16
Uzbekistan	6	5	0	1	18	7	15
Philippines	6	2	1	3	5	9	7
Bahrain	6	2	0	4	7	9	6
Yemen	7	1	0	6	2	14	3

Each team will play 8 games, 4x2, except Group F, 6 games, 3x2; games to be completed by March 2016

● *The 8 group winners and the 4 runners-up with the best record will qualify for the 3rd round (the same teams will also qualify for the 2019 Asian Cup finals)*

3rd round

The 12 qualifiers will be drawn into 2 6-team groups (games to be played Aug 2016-Sep 2017)
● *The top 2 in both groups will qualify for the finals; the 2 3rd-placed countries will meet in the Asia section play-off, the winner of which will meet the 4th-placed CONCACAF country in a play-off for a place in the finals*

AFRICA section

● *5 finals places available*

2nd round

1st legs

Nov11 - Maputo
Mozambique 1 (Helder Pelembe 55)
Gabon 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Nunkoo (Mrs)

Nov11 - Karima
Sudan 0
Zambia 1 (Kalengo 28)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Benouza (Alg)

Nov12 - Cotonou
Benin 2 (Sessegnon pen 45+1, Bello 84)
Burkina Faso 1 (Nakoulma 51)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** El Ahrach (Mor)

Nov12 - Bujumbura
Burundi 2 (C Amissi 38, 83)
DR Congo 3 (Bolasie 5, Mubele 86, 88)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Fakudze (Swa)

Nov12 - Agadir
Morocco 2 (El Arabi 30, Bammou 67)
Equatorial Guinea 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Bennett (SAf)
Sent off: Karrouchi (Morocco) 48

Nov12 - Windhoek
Namibia 0
Guinea 1 (N Keita 27)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Jiyed (Mor)
Sent off: Bamba (Guinea) 50

Nov12 - Lome
Togo 0
Uganda 1 (Miya 40)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Keita (Gui)

Nov13 - Benguela
Angola 1 (Gelson 2)
South Africa 3 (Rantie 13, Gabuza 20, Jali pen 82)
HT: 1-2. **Ref:** Tessema Weyesa (Eth)
Sent off: Jali (South Africa) 83

Nov13 - Mitsamiouli
Comoros 0
Ghana 0
Ref: Matemera (Zim)

Nov13 - Nairobi
Kenya 1 (Olunga 9)
Cape Verde Islands 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Dembele (IvC)

Nov13 - Monrovia
Liberia 0
Ivory Coast 1 (Cyriac 44)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Essrayri (Tun)

Nov13 - Sousse, Tunisia
Libya 1 (Al Badri pen 48)
Rwanda 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Diedhiou (Sen)

Nov13 - Antananarivo
Madagascar 2 (Andriatsima 27, Rakotoharimalala 59)
Senegal 2 (M B Diouf 71, S Mane 81)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Munyemana (Rwa)

Nov13 - Nouakchott
Mauritania 1 (N'Diaye 22)
Tunisia 2 (Khazri 61, Chikhaoui 68)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Otogo-Castane (Gab)

Nov13 - Niamey
Niger 0
Cameroon 3 (Mbia 36, Aboubakar 39, Salli 40)
HT: 0-3. **Ref:** El Jaafari (Mor)

Nov13 - Lobamba
Swaziland 0
Nigeria 0
Ref: Koole (Ben)

Nov14 - Francistown
Botswana 2 (Gadibolae 14, Mogorosi 24)
Mali 1 (Sow 56)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Adelaid (Com)

Nov14 - N'Djamena
Chad 1 (N'Douassel 73)
Egypt 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Udoh (Nga)

Nov14 - Addis Ababa
Ethiopia 3 (Getaneh 40, Dawit Fekadu 82, Shemeles 90+1)
Congo 4 (Bifouma 43, N'Guessi 63, N'Dinga 75, Binguila 81)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Kordi (Tun)

Nov14 - Dar es Salaam
Tanzania 2 (Maguri 43, Samatta 55)
Algeria 2 (Slimani 72, 76)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Keita (Mli)

2nd legs

Nov14 - Libreville
Gabon 1 (Evouna 4)
Mozambique 0
Aet. **HT:** 1-0. **90mins:** 1-0. **Ref:** Camille (Sey)
Agg1-1; Gabon 4-3 on pens

Nov15 - Kinshasa
DR Congo 2 (Nkololo 17, Bolasie pen 78)
Burundi 2 (Mbokani og 28, Abdul Razak pen 89)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Ghebremichael (Eri)
DR Congo 5-4 on agg

Nov15 - Bata
Equatorial Guinea 1 (Rui 14)
Morocco 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Sikazwe (Zam)
Morocco 2-1 on agg

Nov15 - Casablanca, Morocco
Guinea 2 (Idrissa Sylla 43, N Keita 79)
Namibia 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Sinko (IvC)
Guinea 3-0 on agg

Nov15 - Kampala
Uganda 3 (G Massa 5, Miya 40, 44)
Togo 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Nampiandraza (Mad)
Uganda 4-0 on agg

Nov15 - Ndola
Zambia 2 (Musonda 58, Kalengo 81)
Sudan 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Gassama (Gam)
Zambia 3-0 on agg

Nov17 - Blida
Algeria 7 (Brahimi 1, Ghoulam 23, pen 59, Mahrez 43, Slimani pen 49, 75, Medjani 72)
Tanzania 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Alioum (Cam)
Sent off: Abbas (Tanzania) 41
Algeria 9-2 on agg

Nov17 - Ouagadougou
Burkina Faso 2 (Pitroipa pen 17, B Traore 70)
Benin 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Abid (Alg)
Burkina Faso 3-2 on agg

Nov17 - Yaounde
Cameroon 0
Niger 0
Ref: Grisha (Egy)
Cameroon 3-0 on agg

Nov17 - Praia
Cape Verde Islands 2 (Heldon 45, 52)
Kenya 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Lamptey (Gha)
Cape Verde Islands 2-1 on agg

Nov17 - Brazzaville
Congo 2 (F N'Ganga 48, Bifouma 55)
Ethiopia 1 (Getaneh 28)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Mohamed (Sud)
Congo 6-4 on agg

Nov17 - Borg El Arab
Egypt 4 (El Nenny 5, A Said 10, Koka 36, 40)
Chad 0
HT: 4-0. **Ref:** Nkurunziza (Bdi)
Egypt 4-1 on agg

Nov17 - Kumasi
Ghana 2 (Wakaso 18, J Ayew 84)
Comoros 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Ragab (Lby)
Sent off: Mdahoma (Comoros) 75
Ghana 2-0 on agg

Nov17 - Abidjan
Ivory Coast 3 (Sio 16, 35, Seri 64)
Liberia 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Tsiba (Con)
Ivory Coast 4-0 on agg

Nov17 - Bamako
Mali 2 (Diabate pen 9, Sako 29)
Botswana 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Lemghaifry (Mra)
Mali 3-2 on agg

Nov17 - Port Harcourt
Nigeria 2 (Simon 51, Ambrose 87)
Swaziland 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Pavaza (Nam)
Sent off: Phumlani Dlamini (Swaziland) 90
Nigeria 2-0 on agg

Nov17 - Kigali
Rwanda 1 (Tuyisenge 45+3)
Libya 3 (El Monir 40, 90+3, Ghanudi 48)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Aden (Dji)
Libya 4-1 on agg

Nov17 - Dakar
Senegal 3 (Kouyate 19, Konate 54, M B Diouf 82)
Madagascar 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Bondo (Bot)
Senegal 5-2 on agg

Nov17 - Durban
South Africa 1 (Manucho Diniz og 67)
Angola 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Omweno (Ken)
South Africa 4-1 on agg

Nov17 - Rades
Tunisia 2 (S Ben Youssef 50, Bguir 84)
Mauritania 1 (Ahmed 71)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Batte (Uga)
Tunisia 4-2 on agg

3rd round

The 20 qualifiers will be drawn into 5 4-team groups (draw to be made on June 24, 2016; games to be played Oct 2016-Nov 2017)
● *The 5 group winners will qualify for the finals*

CONCACAF section

● *3.5 finals places available*

4th round

Group A

Nov13 - Vancouver
Canada 1 (Larin 38)
Honduras 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Morrison (Jam)
Canada: Borjan - Ouimette, Straith, Jakovic, De Jong, De Guzman (Piette 78), Hutchinson, Johnson, Hoilett (Akindele 81), Ricketts, Larin (M Haber 73).
Honduras: Valladares - Beckeles, M Figueroa, Johnny Palacios, Alvarado, Discua (Tejeda 69), O Garcia, Acosta (M Martinez 65), Garrido, Andino (Quioto 55), Castillo.

Nov13 - Mexico City
Mexico 3 (Guardado 6, H Herrera 42, Vela 64)
El Salvador 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Lopez (Gtm)
Mexico: Munoz - Layun (Lopez 71), Ayala, Moreno, Fuentes, Guardado, H Herrera, Vela, J M Corona, Peralta (R Jimenez 66), J Hernandez (Vazquez 59).
El Salvador: H Hernandez - Dominguez, Barahona, Romero, I Castro (Ortiz 77), Salamanca (Punyed 69), Chavarria, Mayen, Pineda, R Burgos (Jaime Alas 46), Corea.

Nov17 - San Salvador
El Salvador 0
Canada 0
Ref: Geiger (USA)
El Salvador: H Hernandez - I Castro, Dominguez, Zavaleta, Barahona, Romero, Corea (Jimenez 65), Jaime Alas, Pineda, Punyed (Mayen 72), Pena (R Burgos 62).
Canada: Borjan - Ouimette, Straith, Jakovic, De Jong, De Guzman (Piette 71), Johnson (Edgar 71), Hutchinson, Ricketts, Hoilett (Akindele 81), Larin.

Nov17 - San Pedro Sula
Honduras 0
Mexico 2 (J M Corona 66, Damm 72)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Pitti (Pan)
Honduras: Valladares - Izaguirre, Johnny Palacios, M Figueroa, Crisanto, Leveron (Discua 69), M Martinez, O Garcia, Garrido (A Peralta 43), Andino, Castillo (Bengtson 60).
Mexico: Talavera - Layun, Alanis, Ayala, Reyes, Moreno, Guardado, H Herrera, Aquino (J M Corona 60), J Hernandez (Damm 70), R Jimenez (Vazquez 77).

2018 WC QUALS – CONCACAF – 4TH RND: GP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mexico	2	2	0	0	5	0	6
Canada	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
El Salvador	2	0	1	1	0	3	1
Honduras	2	0	0	2	0	3	0

Group B

Nov13 - San Jose
Costa Rica 1 (Gamboa 28)
Haiti 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Martinez (Cub)
Costa Rica: Pemberton - Gamboa, Acosta, Gonzalez, Duarte, Matarrita, Borges (Azofeifa 46), B Ruiz, Campbell (Urena 73), Venegas, Saborio (Bolanos 61).
Haiti: Placide - Alcenat, Jerome, Jaggy, J-J Pierre, Guerrier, Goreux (J Louis 71), Alexandre, Hilaire (Mustivar 60), Nazon (Belfort 68), Genevois.

Nov13 - Kingston
Jamaica 0
Panama 2 (Cooper 43, Morgan og 52)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Garcia Orozco (Mex)
Jamaica: Kerr - Morgan, Lawrence, Hector, Mariappa, Watson (Orgill 84), Austin, McAnuff, McCleary (Powell 70), Mattocks (Donaldson 62), Barnes.
Panama: Calderon - Baloy, Dixon, Machado, L Henriquez, Gomez (Chen 90+3), Godoy, Pimentel, Cooper (A Henriquez 85), Quintero (Arroyo 86), B Perez.

Nov17 - Port-au-Prince
Haiti 0
Jamaica 1 (Donaldson 63)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Santos (PR)
Haiti: Placide - Jerome, Alcenat, Jaggy, Bertin, J Louis, Norde (Guerrier 76), Alexandre (Millien 82), Mustivar (Belfort 70), Hilaire, Nazon.
Jamaica: Blake - Powell, Hector, Morgan, Lawrence, Mariappa, Williamson (Orgill 85), Watson, McAnuff (Mattocks 90+2), Phillips, Donaldson (Clennon 90).

Nov17 - Panama City
Panama 1 (Tejada 71)
Costa Rica 2 (B Ruiz 65, Urena 68)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Aguilar (ESv)
Panama: Penedo - Machado, Baloy (Arroyo 88), Dixon (Davis 68), L Henriquez, Gomez (Tejada 68), Cooper, Godoy, Pimentel, Quintero, B Perez.
Costa Rica: Pemberton - Acosta, Gonzalez, Waston, Gamboa, Matarrita (Diaz 83), Azofeifa, Granados, B Ruiz, Urena (Saborio 89), Campbell (Bolanos 70).

2018 WC QUALS – CONCACAF – 4TH RND: GP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Costa Rica	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Panama	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Jamaica	2	1	0	1	1	2	3
Haiti	2	0	0	2	0	2	0

Group C
Nov13 - Guatemala City
Guatemala 1 (Mejia 90)
Trinidad & Tobago 2 (Hyland 67, K Jones 80)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Bourdeau (Can)
Guatemala: P Motta - Hamilton Lopez, Vasquez (Mejia 55), D Lopez, Hernandez, Cincotta (Henry Lopez 74), Thompson, Contreras, Pappa, Tinoco (M Lopez 83), C Ruiz.
Trinidad & Tobago: J-M Williams - Cyrus, Abu Bakr, Bateau, M Williams, Hyland, Boucaud, Peltier (Cato 64), Cummings (K George 63), J Jones, K Jones (Plaza 84).

Nov13 - St Louis
United States 6 (Wood 11, F Johnson 29, Altidore 31, 74, Cameron 51, Zardes 58)
St Vincent & The Grenadines 1 (Anderson 5)
HT: 3-1. **Ref:** Solis (CR)
United States: Guzan - Yedlin, Cameron (Miazga 64), Besler, Ream, Zardes, Jones, Bradley, F Johnson (Nagbe 64), Wood (Morris 68), Altidore.
St Vincent: W McDowall - Richards, McBurnette (A Solomon 60), Hamlet, Anderson, Slater, G James (Ledger 60), K Francis, Prescott, Bowens (Edwards 75), Richardson.

Nov17 - Kingstown
St Vincent & The Grenadines 0
Guatemala 4 (Cincotta 23, M Lopez 31, D Lopez 47, Tinoco 80)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Fischer (Can)
St Vincent: W McDowall - Richards, McBurnette (Ledger 58), Hamlet, Lowman, J McDowall, K Francis, Slater (S Samuel 64), Anderson, G James (A Solomon 46), Richardson.
Guatemala: P Motta - Hamilton Lopez, Mejia, D Lopez, Hernandez, Cincotta, Thompson, Contreras (Marquez 82), De Leon, M Lopez (Pappa 75), C Ruiz (Tinoco 67).

Nov17 - Port of Spain
Trinidad & Tobago 0
United States 0
Ref: Ramos (Mex)
Trinidad & Tobago: J-M Williams - Bateau, Cyrus, M Williams (Hoyte 76), Abu Bakr, K George, Hyland, J Jones, Boucaud (Cummings 82), Cato (Caesar 85), K Jones.
United States: Howard - Orozco, Cameron, Besler, Ream (Nagbe 68), Yedlin, Jones, Bradley, F Johnson, Zardes (Wood 76), Altidore.

2018 WC QUALS – CONCACAF – 4TH RND: GP C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
United States	2	1	1	0	6	1	4
Trinidad & T	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Guatemala	2	1	0	1	5	2	3
St Vincent & G	2	0	0	2	1	10	0

Each team will play 6 games, 3x2; games to be completed by Sep 2016

● *The top 2 in each group will qualify for the 5th round*

5th round
The 6 qualifiers will form a single group (games to be played Nov 2016-Oct 2017)
● *The top 3 will qualify for the finals; the 4th-placed country will meet the winner of the Asia section play-off in a play-off for a place in the finals*

OCEANIA section
● *0.5 finals places available*

2nd round draw
Group A
New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tahiti

Group B
Fiji, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu

Games to be played May 2016-June 2016

● *The top 3 in both groups will qualify for the 3rd round*

3rd round
The 6 qualifiers will be drawn into 2 3-team groups (games to be played Mar 2017-Oct 2017)
● *The 2 group winners will qualify for the play-off round*

Play-off round
The 2 qualifiers will meet in a play-off (games to be played in Nov 2017)
● *The play-off round winner will meet the 5th-placed South American country in a play-off for a place in the finals*

EUROPE section
● *13 finals places available (excluding the place for hosts* **Russia**, *who qualify automatically)*

Draw
Group A
Belarus, Bulgaria, France, Holland, Luxembourg, Sweden

Group B
Andorra, Faroe Islands, Hungary, Latvia, Portugal, Switzerland

Group C
Azerbaijan, Czech Republic, Germany, Northern Ireland, Norway, San Marino

Group D
Austria, Georgia, Moldova, Republic of Ireland, Serbia, Wales

Group E
Armenia, Denmark, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Poland, Romania

Group F
England, Lithuania, Malta, Scotland, Slovakia, Slovenia

Group G
Albania, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Macedonia, Spain

Group H
Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece

Group I
Croatia, Finland, Iceland, Turkey, Ukraine

Games to be played Sep 2016-Oct 2017

● *The 9 group winners will qualify for the finals; the 8 runners-up with the best record will be paired in 4 play-offs, the winners of which will also qualify for the finals*

EURO 2016 QUALIFIERS

Play-offs
1st legs
Nov12 - Oslo
Norway 0
Hungary 1 (Kleinheisler 26)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 27,192. **Ref:** Clattenburg (Eng)
Norway: Nyland - Elabdellaoui, Hovland, Forren, Hogli, Skjelbred (Helland 86), Tettey, Johansen, Berget (M Elyounoussi 74), Henriksen, Soderlund (Pedersen 61).
Hungary: Kiraly - Fiola, Guzmics, Lang, Kadar, Kleinheisler (Nagy 72), Gera, Elek, Dzsudzsak (Lovrencsics 76), Nemeth, Szalai (Priskin 90+2).

Nov13 - Zenica
Bosnia-Herzegovina 1 (Dzeko 85)
Republic of Ireland 1 (Brady 82)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Brych (Ger)
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Begovic - Mujdza (O Vranjes 51), Sunjic, Spahic, Zukanovic, Visca (Djuric 73), Pjanic, Cocalic, Lulic (I Hajrovic 88), Ibisevic, Dzeko.
Rep Ireland: Randolph - Coleman, Keogh, Clark, Ward (Wilson 67), Hendrick, McCarthy, Hoolahan (McClean 60), Whelan, Brady (McGeady 86), D Murphy.

Nov14 - Stockholm
Sweden 2 (Forsberg 45, Ibrahimovic pen 50)
Denmark 1 (N Jorgensen 80)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 49,053. **Ref:** Rizzoli (Ita)
Sweden: Isaksson - Lustig, Antonsson (E Johansson 29), Granqvist, M Olsson, Durmaz (S Larsson 68), Lewicki, Kallstrom, Forsberg, Berg, Ibrahimovic (Guidetti 82).
Denmark: Schmeichel - Jacobsen, Kjaer, Agger, Durmisi, Braithwaite (Y Poulsen 71), Kahlenberg (N Jorgensen 54), Kvist, Eriksen, Fischer (Hojbjerg 54), Bendtner.

Nov14 - Lviv
Ukraine 2 (Yarmolenko 22, Seleznyov 54)
Slovenia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 32,592. **Ref:** Eriksson (Swe)
Ukraine: Pyatov - Khacheridi, Shevchuk, Fedetskyi, Rakitskyi, Konoplyanka, Sydorchuk, Rybalka, Harmash (Malinovskyi 79), Yarmolenko (Karavayev 90), Seleznyov (Kravets 84).
Slovenia: S Handanovic - Jokic, Cesar, Ilic, Brecko, Kurtic, Krhin, Kampl, Ilicic (Bezjac 63), Birsa (Pecnik 73), Novakovic (Ljubijankic 90).

2nd legs
Nov15 - Budapest
Hungary 2 (Priskin 14, Henriksen og 83)
Norway 1 (Henriksen 87)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 22,189. **Ref:** Velasco Carballo (Spa)
Hungary 3-1 on agg
Hungary: Kiraly - Fiola, Guzmics, Lang, Kadar, Elek (Pinter 46), Lovrencsics, Kleinheisler (Nemeth 75), Nagy, Dzsudzsak, Priskin (Bode 62).
Norway: Nyland - Elabdellaoui, Forren, Hovland, Aleesami, Tettey, Skjelbred (Berget 80), Johansen, Odegaard (Pedersen 46), M Elyounoussi (Helland 46), Henriksen.

Nov16 - Dublin
Republic of Ireland 2 (Walters pen 24, 70)
Bosnia-Herzegovina 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,500. **Ref:** Kuipers (Hol)
Republic of Ireland 3-1 on agg
Rep Ireland: Randolph - Coleman, Keogh, Clark, Brady, Hendrick, Whelan (O'Shea 90), McCarthy, Hoolahan (McClean 55), D Murphy (Long 55), Walters.
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Begovic - O Vranjes, Zukanovic, Spahic, Kolasinac, Medunjanin (Djuric 69), Cocalic (Besic 46), Visca, Pjanic, Lulic (Ibisevic 80), Dzeko.

Nov17 - Copenhagen
Denmark 2 (Y Poulsen 82, Vestergaard 90+1)
Sweden 2 (Ibrahimovic 19, 76)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 36,051. **Ref:** Atkinson (Eng)
Sweden 4-3 on agg
Denmark: Schmeichel - Jacobsen, Kjaer, Agger, Durmisi (Vestergaard 84), Hojbjerg, Delaney (Krohn-Dehli 46), Y Poulsen, Eriksen, N Jorgensen, Bendtner (M Rasmussen 60).
Sweden: Isaksson - Lustig, E Johansson, Granqvist, P Bengtsson (M Olsson 86), S Larsson (Hiljemark 81), Lewicki, Kallstrom (G Svensson 69), Forsberg, Berg, Ibrahimovic.

Nov17 - Maribor
Slovenia 1 (Cesar 11)
Ukraine 1 (Yarmolenko 90+7)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 12,702. **Ref:** Cakir (Tur)
Ukraine 3-1 on agg
Slovenia: S Handanovic - Brecko, Ilic, Cesar, Jokic, Krhin, Pecnik (Ilicic 67), Kampl, Birsa (Lazarevic 80), Bezjak (Ljubijankic 68), Novakovic. *Sent off: Brecko 90+3.*
Ukraine: Pyatov - Fedetskyi, Khacheridi, Rakitskyi, Shevchuk, Rybalka, Yarmolenko, Stepanenko, Sydorchuk (Harmash 61), Konoplyanka (Tymoshchuk 90+6), Seleznyov (Kravets 80).

● *The winners qualify for the finals*

40 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE TNMT

Played in Luanda, Angola

Semi-finals
Nov 6
Angola 1 (Bua 38)
Namibia 0
HT: 1-0

Nov 6
DR Congo 3 (Bopunga 32, Lusadisu 35, Mundele 62)
Zambia 0
HT: 2-0

3rd-place match
Nov 7
Namibia 0
Zambia 0
Namibia 4-3 on pens

Final
Nov 7
Angola 1 (Bua 58)
DR Congo 0
HT: 0-0

FRIENDLIES

Tuesday, November 3
Nov 3 - Phnom Penh
Cambodia 6 (Mony Udom 20, 40, Sokthorn 30, Sokpheng 54, 62, Visal 90+2)
Brunei 1 (Abdul Rahman 12)
HT: 3-1

Wednesday, November 4
Nov 4 - Kingstown
St Vincent & The Grenadines 2 (Slater 79, S Samuel 84)
Antigua & Barbuda 1 (T Harriette 17)
HT: 0-1
Sent off: Griffith (Antigua & Barbuda) 77 (from bench)

Thursday, November 5
Nov 5 - Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates 5 (M Abdulrahman 32, Omar 38, Mabkhout 64, 76, 81)
Turkmenistan 1 (Muhadov 58)
HT: 2-0

Saturday, November 7
Nov 7 - Hong Kong
Hong Kong 5 (McKee 3, 45, Chan Siu Ki 33, Sandro 66, Akande 75)
Myanmar 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 5,253
Sent off: Nanda Kyaw (Myanmar) 61

Nov 7 - Port Vila
Vanuatu 1 (Tangis 11)
Fiji 1 (Zahid 90+4)
HT: 1-0

Tuesday, November 10
Nov10 - Port Vila
Vanuatu 2 (B Kaltack pen 23, Nicolls 43)
Fiji 1 (R Krishna 47)
HT: 2-0

Wednesday, November 11
Nov11 - Tallinn
Estonia 3 (Purje 60, Pikk 65, Gussev 88)
Georgia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 2,266. **Ref:** Crangle (NI)
Estonia: Aksalu - Jaager, Baranov, Klavan, Pikk (Gussev 66), Kams (S Puri 54), Aleksandr Dmitrijev (Lindpere 81), Mets, Vassiljev (Frolov 89), Kallaste, Purje (Sappinen 73).
Georgia: Loria - Kakabadze, Grigalava (Hufnagel 68), Kashia, Amisulashvili, Kankava, Kazaishvili (Beglarishvili 79), Tsintsadze (Daushvili 72), Kobakhidze (Chanturia 46), Vatsadze (Tskhadadze 46), Navalovski (Popkhadze 68).

Nov11 - Istanbul, Turkey
Jordan 2 (Al Dardour 25, Al Bakhit 90)
Malta 0
HT: 1-0
Jordan: Shafi (Yaseen) - Al Zawahreh (Bani Yaseen), Al Basha, Zahran, Al Dmeiri (Abdelhalim), Abdulrahman, Ayed (Murjan), Abu Amarah (Al Saify), Al Bakhit, Abdallah Deeb, Al Dardour (Za'tara).
Malta: Hogg - Zerafa (E Briffa 81), S Borg, Agius, Bugeja, Failla (Camenzuli 58), P Fenech (Cremona 64), Kristensen (Schembri 71), Sciberras (C Borg 87), R Briffa (M Mifsud 54), Effiong.

Thursday, November 12

Nov12 - Andorra La Vella
Andorra 0
St Kitts & Nevis 1 (Elliott 8)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Azzopardi (Mlt)
Andorra: Gomes - C Martinez, San Nicolas (Jesus Rubio 51), Sonejee (Ayala 27), Rebes, Lima, Pujol (Peppe 51), M Vieira (Clemente 72), Riera (Gomez 60), Moreira (Juli Sanchez 72), Jordi Rubio.
St Kitts & Nevis: Archibald - A Harris, Williams, Maynard, St Juste, T Leader, O Mitchum, Thomas, Sawyers (Ible 87), Panayiotou (Flemming 90), Elliott (Walwyn 70).

Nov12 - Skopje
Macedonia 4 (Sikov 35, Trajkovski pen 38, 41, 64)
Montenegro 1 (Jovetic 88)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 400. **Ref:** Stoyanov (Bul)
Macedonia: Dimitrievski - Ristovski, Sikov, Mojsov, Zhuta, Stjepanovic (Brdarovski 78), Gligorov, A Ibraimi, Trickovski (Petrovikj 58), K Velkoski (Nestorovski 58), Trajkovski (Ilijoski 83).
Montenegro: Poleksic - Savic, Basa, Simic, Tomasevic (Balic 81), N Vukcevic (Kascelan 68), Boljevic (Zverotic 46), Rodic (Mandic 46), Marusic (Vucinic 46), Jovetic, Beciraj (Mugosa 68).

Nov12 - Seeb
Oman 0
New Zealand 1 (Wood 5)
HT: 0-1
New Zealand: Marinovic - Boxall, Tzimopoulos, Brotherton, Fenton, Thomas, Rojas (Hudson-Wihongi 80), McGlinchey, Lewis (Rogerson 67), Wood, Cameron (Rufer 42).

Friday, November 13

Nov13 - Brussels
Belgium 3 (Vertonghen 13, De Bruyne 74, Batshuayi 83)
Italy 1 (Candreva 3)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Marciniak (Pol)
Belgium: Mignolet - Cavanda (Denayer 63), Alderweireld, Lombaerts, Vertonghen, Witsel, Nainggolan, Ferreira Carrasco (Mirallas 87), De Bruyne, E Hazard, R Lukaku (Batshuayi 63).
Italy: Buffon - Darmian, Bonucci (Barzagli 90+2), Chiellini, De Sciglio (Antonelli 90), Florenzi (El Shaarawy 80), Marchisio, Parolo (Soriano 60), Candreva, Pelle (Okaka 80), Eder (Zaza 80).

Nov13 - Ostrava
Czech Republic 4 (Sivok 17, Necid pen 63, Krejci 82, Zahustel 90)
Serbia 1 (Skuletic 78)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 14,975. **Ref:** Vnuk (Slk)
Czech Republic: Vaclik - Kaderabek, Sivok, M Kadlec, Pudil, Pavelka, Darida (Vacek 86), Dockal (Plasil 56), Sural (Krejci 71), Skalak (Zahustel 71), Necid (Skoda 80).
Serbia: Stojkovic - Tomovic (Petkovic 82), Ivanovic, D Tosic, Kolarov, Milivojevic (Gudelj 69), Matic (Petrovic 82), Ljajic, Tadic (Katai 59), Z Tosic (Kostic 59), A Mitrovic (Skuletic 69).

Nov13 - Paris
France 2 (Giroud 45+1, Gignac 86)
Germany 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 80,000. **Ref:** Mateu Lahoz (Spa)
France: Lloris - Sagna, Varane, Koscielny, Evra, L Diarra (Schneiderlin 80), Pogba, Matuidi (Cabaye 88), Griezmann (Ben Arfa 80), Giroud (Gignac 69), Martial (Coman 69).
Germany: Neuer - Rudiger, Boateng (Mustafi 46), Hummels, Ginter (Volland 79), Khedira (Gundogan 61), Schweinsteiger, Hector (Can 34), T Muller, Draxler (Sane 61), Gomez.

Nov13 - Pristina
Kosovo 2 (Celina pen 59, Rashani 70)
Albania 2 (Manaj 55, Rrahmani 73)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Jemini (Alb)
Kosovo: Ujkani (Bekaj 89) - Perdedaj, I Berisha (Pnishi 5), Sadiku, Paqarada, Alushi (Pepa 65), Zejnullahu (Kryeziu 46), Halimi, Brahimi (Rashani 65; Markaj 80), B Berisha (Hasani 84), Celina.
Albania: Berisha (Shehi 77) - Hysaj (Roshi 81), Rrahmani (Lila 84), Cana (Ajeti 63), Djimsiti (Veseli 63), Aliji, Basha (Lenjani 77), Memushaj (Shala 81), Xhaka (Lilaj 77), Cikalleshi (Manaj 54), Sadiku (Gashi 77).

Nov13 - Differdange
Luxembourg 1 (Joachim 90+2)
Greece 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 1,800. **Ref:** Marshall (NI)
Luxembourg: Joubert - Delgado, Malget, Chanot, Jans, Philipps (Payal 67), Gerson (Thill 76), Mutsch (Holter 85), Bensi (Schnell 90), Joachim, C Martins (Da Mota 64).
Greece: Kapino - Vyntra, K Papadopoulos, Siovas (Moras 78), Tzavellas, Tachtsidis, Pelkas (Tziolis 46), Samaris, Holebas (Aravidis 69), Mitroglou, Karelis.

Nov13 - Belfast
Northern Ireland 1 (Davis 55)
Latvia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 11,707. **Ref:** Al Hoaish (Sau)
N Ireland: McGovern (Carroll 46) - McAuley, Cathcart, J Evans, Dallas (Ferguson 69), C McLaughlin, Davis (McCourt 84), Baird, Norwood (C Evans 46), K Lafferty (Magennis 54), Ward (Boyce 69).
Latvia: Vanins (Steinbors 73) - Gorkss, Jagodinskis, Gabovs, Kurakins, Zjuzins, Tarasovs, Laizans (Ikaunieks 78), A Visnakovs (Rudnevs 59), Rakels (Kamess 85), E Visnakovs (Sabala 71).

Nov13 - Warsaw
Poland 4 (Grosicki 52, Kapustka 66, Lewandowski 76, 79)
Iceland 2 (G Sigurdsson pen 4, Finnbogason 69)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 56,207. **Ref:** Sutton (RoI)
Poland: Szczesny - Piszczek, Szukala, Glik, Wawrzyniak (Kapustka 65), Blaszczykowski, (Rybus 12), Krychowiak, Zielinski (Maczynski 65), Milik (Stepinski 86), Grosicki (Linetty 86), Lewandowski (Sobiech 90).
Iceland: Kristinsson - B Saevarsson, Eyjolfsson, R Sigurdsson, A Skulason, Traustason, A Gunnarsson (R Sigurjonsson 46), G Sigurdsson, Bodvarsson (J Gudmundsson 76), B Bjarnason (T Bjarnason 46), Sigthorsson (Finnbogason 16).

Nov13 - Doha
Qatar 1 (Assadalla 26)
Turkey 2 (Arda 70, Tosun 73)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Vad (Hun)
Qatar: Lecomte - Musa (Muftah 77), A Hassan (I Mohammad 84), Mukhtar, Hatem (A Mohammed 58), Luiz Junior, Assadalla (M T Abdullah 77), Al Haidos, Majid, Khoukhi, Muntari.
Turkey: Volkan Babacan - Sener (Gokhan Gonul 63), Serdar (Sahan 43), Atinc, Emre Tasdemir (Ismail 73), Mehmet Topal, Ozan, Ozyakup (Malli 46), Calhanoglu (Oztekin 59), Arda, Tosun (Alper 83).

Nov13 - Trnava
Slovakia 3 (Duris 39, 48, Mak 55)
Switzerland 2 (Derdiyok 63, Drmic 67)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 17,582. **Ref:** Zelinka (CzR)
Slovakia: Mucha - Gyomber (Sabo 74), Skrtel, Durica, Hubocan, Hrosovsky (Gregus 86), Kucka (Pecovsky 74), Mak (Sestak 74), Hamsik (Duda 88), Weiss (Jakubko 74), Duris.
Switzerland: Burki - Lichtsteiner (Lang 58), Schar, Djourou, Moubandje, Fernandes (Behrami 58), Inler (Zuffi 75), Kasami (Drmic 58), Shaqiri, Derdiyok (Seferovic 75), Stocker (Mehmedi 58).

Nov13 - Alicante
Spain 2 (Mario 72, Cazorla 84)
England 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 28,000. **Ref:** Mazzoleni (Ita)
Spain: Casillas - Mario, Pique, Bartra (Azpilicueta 82), Jordi Alba, Busquets (Koke 78), Thiago (Cazorla 27), Iniesta (Nolito 46), Fabregas, Diego Costa (Mata 64), Paco Alcacer (Pedro 74).
England: Hart - Walker, Jones, Smalling (Cahill 85), Bertrand, Delph (Alli 63), Carrick (Shelvey 90), Lallana (Dier 63), Barkley (Rooney 73), Sterling, Kane.

Nov13 - Cardiff
Wales 2 (Ledley 45+3, Huws 70)
Holland 3 (Dost 32, Robben 55, 81)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 25,699. **Ref:** Bastien (Fra)
Wales: Hennessey (Fon Williams 74) - Gunter (Henley 66), A Williams (J Collins 46), Chester, Davies, N Taylor (Dummett 65), J Williams (G Williams 59), Allen, Ledley (Huws 56), King, Lawrence.
Holland: Cillessen - Janmaat, Bruma, Blind, Kongolo, Clasie (Bazoer 87), Van Dijk (Veltman 46), Sneijder, Promes (Wijnaldum 90), Robben, Dost.

Saturday, November 14

Nov14 - Hong Kong
Hong Kong 2 (Hui Ka Lok 63, Chan Siu Kwan 79)
Macau 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 1,318

Nov14 - Krasnodar
Russia 1 (Shirokov 89)
Portugal 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Mazic (Ser)
Russia: Akinfeev - Kuzmin (Shishkin 45+1), Ignashevich, A Berezutsky, Zhirkov, Dzagoev, Denisov, Shirokov, Mamaev (Ignatyev 77), Samedov (Smolov 66), Dzyuba.
Portugal: Rui Patricio - Bruno Alves, Pepe, Cedric, Eliseu, William Carvalho, Joao Mario (Rafa Silva 90), Andre Andre (Ruben Neves 72), Goncalo Guedes (Ricardo Pereira 82), Nelson Oliveira (Lucas Joao 72), Nani.

Monday, November 16

Nov16 - Tirana
Albania 2 (Basha 88, Cikalleshi 90+4)
Georgia 2 (Amisulashvili 2, Chanturia 52)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Massa (Ita)
Albania: Berisha (Hoxha 75) - Lila (Djimsiti 30), Ajeti, Veseli, Agolli, Lilaj, Xhaka (Basha 57), Roshi (Manaj 61), Lenjani (Shala 57), Gashi (Cikalleshi 65), Sadiku.
Georgia: Revishvili - Lobzhanidze, Grigalava, Kashia, Amisulashvili, Kankava, Daushvili, Gelashvili (Tskhadadze 76), Kazaishvili (Kobakhidze 82), Chanturia (Kakabadze 90), Navalovski.

Tuesday, November 17

Nov17 - Vienna
Austria 1 (Alaba 14)
Switzerland 2 (Seferovic 10, 39)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 27,600. **Ref:** Grafe (Ger)
Austria: Ozcan - Klein, Prodl (Hinteregger 4), Dragovic, Fuchs, Baumgartlinger (Kainz 82), Alaba, Jantscher (Onisiwo 58), Arnautovic, Sabitzer (Ilsanker 46), Okotie (Hinterseer 66).
Switzerland: Sommer - Lichtsteiner (Lang 19), Djourou, Klose, Moubandje, Shaqiri (Widmer 88), Inler (Zuffi 60), Behrami, Mehmedi (Stocker 60), Drmic (Lustenberger 70), Seferovic (Derdiyok 75).

Nov17 - Baku
Azerbaijan 2 (Carp og 32, Ramazanov 50)
Moldova 1 (Antoniuc 44)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Silagava (Geo)
Azerbaijan: S Agayev (A Mammadov 46) - Qarayev, Pashayev (U Abbasov 69), Medvedev, B Huseynov, Hajiyev (Rzazade 63), E Mammadov (Eyyubov 76), R Kurbanov (Ramazanov 46), Amirguliyev, Dashdemirov (T Guliev 90+1), Ismayilov.
Moldova: Cebanu - Armas, Carp, Golovatenco, Jardan, Cojocari (Istrati 68), Antoniuc (Maxim 73), Dedov, Bordian, Onica, Potirniche (Cociuc 87).

Nov17 - London
England 2 (Alli 39, Rooney 48)
France 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 71,223. **Ref:** Eriksson (Swe)
England: Hart (Butland 46) - Clyne, Cahill, Stones, Gibbs, Dier, Alli (Jones 88), Sterling (Lallana 68), Barkley (Shelvey 79), Kane (Bertrand 80), Rooney.
France: Lloris - Sagna, Varane, Koscielny, Digne, Schneiderlin (Sissoko 82), Cabaye (L Diarra 57), Matuidi (Pogba 46), Ben Arfa (Coman 46), Gignac (Giroud 57), Martial (Griezmann 67).

Nov17 - Tallinn
Estonia 3 (Antonov 29, Vassiljev 50, S Puri 57)
St Kitts & Nevis 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 1,902. **Ref:** Reinert (Far)
Estonia: Londak (Pareiko 46) - Jurgenson, Jaager, Baranov, Pikk, S Puri (Kams 81), Aleksandr Dmitrijev (Lindpere 70), Mets (Antonov 18), Vassiljev, Kallaste (Gussev 62), Purje (Sappinen 46).
St Kitts & Nevis: Archibald (Jeffers 87) - A Harris, Maynard, T Leader, St Juste (Walwyn 87), Williams, O Mitchum (Ible 74), Thomas (Flemming 59), Panayiotou, Sawyers, Tishan Hanley (Elliott 46).

Nov17 - Bologna
Italy 2 (Marchisio pen 56, Gabbiadini 66)
Romania 2 (Stancu 8, Andone 88)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 22,511. **Ref:** Jaccottet (Swi)
Italy: Buffon (Sirigu 71) - Darmian, Barzagli, Bonucci, Chiellini, Florenzi, Marchisio (Parolo 77), Soriano (Montolivo 60), El Shaarawy (Candreva 81), Pelle (Okaka 60), Eder (Gabbiadini 60).
Romania: Tatarusanu - Sapunaru, Chiriches, Grigore, Rat (Filip 82), Hoban, Pintilii (Prepelita 70), Torje (Andone 70), Budescu (Maxim 46), Stancu (Ivan 84), Keseru (Sanmartean 46).

Nov17 - Luxembourg
Luxembourg 0
Portugal 2 (Andre Andre 31, Nani 87)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 8,031. **Ref:** Chapron (Fra)
Luxembourg: Joubert - Delgado, Philipps (Thill 46), Gerson (Holter 90), Jans, Mutsch, Chanot, Malget (Payal 46), Bensi (Deville 66), Joachim (Turpel 72), C Martins (Da Mota 46).
Portugal: Anthony Lopes - Vieirinha, Jose Fonte, Neto, Raphael Guerreiro, Ruben Neves (William Carvalho 79), Danilo Pereira (Ricardo Pereira 90), Andre Andre (Joao Mario 70), Bernardo Silva (Goncalo Guedes 63), Lucas Joao (Nelson Oliveira 80), Rafa Silva (Nani 63).

Nov17 - Skopje
Macedonia 0
Lebanon 1 (Oumari 47)
HT: 0-0
Macedonia: Dimitrievski - Ristovski (Brdarovski 70), Sikov, Mojsov, Zhuta, Stjepanovic (Bardhi 46), Gligorov (Petrovikj 63), Trickovski, K Velkoski (Angelov 78), Nestorovski (Ilijoski 46), Trajkovski.

Nov17 - Wroclaw
Poland 3 (Milik 3, Jodlowiec 12, Grosicki 70)
Czech Republic 1 (Krejci 41)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 40,793. **Ref:** Szabo (Hun)
Poland: Boruc - Jedrzejczyk, Glik (Cionek 46), Pazdan (Dawidowicz 87), Rybus, Grosicki (Peszko 73), Jodlowiec (Borysiuk 78), Maczynski, Linetty (Mila 77), Kapustka (Sobiech 83), Milik.
Czech Republic: Cech - Kalas (Pudil 76), Suchy, Prochazka, Bartosak (Kaderabek 76), Zahustel (Skalak 58), Vacek, Plasil, Pospisil (Darida 84), Krejci (Sural 58), Skoda (Necid 67).

Nov17 - Rostov
Russia 1 (Smolov 15)
Croatia 3 (N Kalinic 57, Brozovic 59, Mandzukic 81)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Turpin (Fra)
Russia: Lodygin (Rebrov 46) - Shishkin, Vasin (Ignashevich 89), Semenov, Kombarov (Novoseltsev 65), Yusupov, Glushakov (Mamaev 71), Ionov (Ignatyev 65), Shirokov, Cheryshev (Dzyuba 70), Smolov.
Croatia: L Kalinic (Vargic 90+1) - Pivaric, Vida, Leskovic, Srna (Vrsaljko 46), Mocinic, Badelj, Brozovic, Perisic, Mandzukic (Kramaric 87), N Kalinic (Milovic 75).

Nov17 - Zilina
Slovakia 3 (Mak 58, 61, Duris 84)
Iceland 1 (Finnbogason 8)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,568. **Ref:** Raczkowski (Pol)
Slovakia: Novota - Gyomber, Salata, Durica (Sabo 46), Tesak, Pecovsky (Hrosovsky 46), Gregus, Mak (Duris 75), Duda, Weiss, Nemec (Jakubko 75).
Iceland: Kristinsson - Hauksson, Arnason (R Sigurdsson 75), Ingason, A Skulason (B Saevarsson 55), J Gudmundsson (O Sigurjonsson 81), B Bjarnason, R Sigurjonsson (T Bjarnason 10), Traustason (Bodvarsson 19), Finnbogason (Omarsson 90), Sigthorsson.

Nov17 - Istanbul
Turkey 0
Greece 0
Att: 17,000. **Ref:** Valeri (Ita)
Turkey: Volkan Babacan - Gokhan Gonul, Ahmet, Ismail, Mehmet Topal, Sahan (Okay 74), Ozan (Alper 86), Ozyakup (Emre Colak 63), Arda (Oztekin 90+2), Calhanoglu (Emre Tasdemir 81), Tosun (Malli 63).
Greece: Karnezis - Manolas (Siovas 78), K Papadopoulos, Torosidis, Papastathopoulos, Holebas (Tzavellas 90), Tziolis, Fortounis (Karelis 90), Tachtsidis (Petsos 46), Samaris, Mitroglou (Giannou 70).

UNDER-17 WORLD CUP

Played in Chile

Group A
Oct 17: Nigeria 2 United States 0; Chile 1 Croatia 1.
Oct 20: United States 2 Croatia 2; Chile 1 Nigeria 5.
Oct 23: United States 1 Chile 4; Croatia 2 Nigeria 1.

UNDER-17 WORLD CUP – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nigeria (Q)	3	2	0	1	8	3	6
Croatia (Q)	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
Chile (Q)	3	1	1	1	6	7	4
United States	3	0	1	2	3	8	1

Group B
Oct 17: England 1 Guinea 1; Brazil 0 South Korea 1.
Oct 20: England 0 Brazil 1; South Korea 1 Guinea 0.
Oct 23: Guinea 1 Brazil 3; South Korea 0 England 0.

UNDER-17 WORLD CUP – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sth Korea (Q)	3	2	1	0	2	0	7
Brazil (Q)	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
England	3	0	2	1	1	2	2
Guinea	3	0	1	2	2	5	1

Group C
Oct 18: Australia 1 Germany 4; Mexico 2 Argentina 0.
Oct 21: Australia 0 Mexico 0; Argentina 0 Germany 4.
Oct 24: Argentina 1 Australia 2; Germany 1 Mexico 2.

UNDER-17 WORLD CUP – GROUP C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mexico (Q)	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Germany (Q)	3	2	0	1	9	3	6
Australia (Q)	3	1	1	1	3	5	4
Argentina	3	0	0	3	1	8	0

Group D
Oct 18: Belgium 0 Mali 0; Honduras 1 Ecuador 3.
Oct 21: Belgium 2 Honduras 1; Ecuador 1 Mali 2.
Oct 24: Mali 3 Honduras 0; Ecuador 2 Belgium 0.

UNDER-17 WORLD CUP – GROUP D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mali (Q)	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
Ecuador (Q)	3	2	0	1	6	3	6
Belgium (Q)	3	1	1	1	2	3	4
Honduras	3	0	0	3	2	8	0

Group E
Oct 19: South Africa 1 Costa Rica 2; North Korea 0 Russia 2.
Oct 22: South Africa 1 North Korea 1; Russia 1 Costa Rica 1.
Oct 25: Russia 2 South Africa 0; Costa Rica 1 North Korea 2.

UNDER-17 WORLD CUP – GROUP E	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Russia (Q)	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
Costa Rica (Q)	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Nth Korea (Q)	3	1	1	1	3	4	4
South Africa	3	0	1	2	2	5	1

Group F
Oct 19: New Zealand 1 France 6; Syria 1 Paraguay 4.
Oct 22: New Zealand 0 Syria 0; Paraguay 3 France 4.
Oct 25: France 4 Syria 0; Paraguay 1 New Zealand 2.

UNDER-17 WORLD CUP – GROUP F	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France (Q)	3	3	0	0	14	4	9
N Zealand (Q)	3	1	1	1	3	7	4
Paraguay	3	1	0	2	8	7	3
Syria	3	0	1	2	1	8	1

● *The top 2 in each group and the 4 3rd-placed teams with the best record qualified for the1st knockout round*

1st knockout round
Oct 28: Brazil 1 New Zealand 0; Mexico 4 Chile 1; Nigeria 6 Australia 0; South Korea 0 Belgium 2.
Oct 29: Croatia 2 Germany 0; Mali 3 North Korea 0; Russia 1 Ecuador 4; France 0 Costa Rica 0 (aet, Costa Rica 5-3 on pens).

Quarter-finals
Nov 1: Brazil 0 Nigeria 3; Croatia 0 Mali 1.
Nov 2: Ecuador 0 Mexico 2; Belgium 1 Costa Rica 0.

Semi-finals
Nov 5: Mali 3 Belgium 1; Mexico 2 Nigeria 4.

3rd-place match
Nov 8: Belgium 3 Mexico 2.

Final
Nov 8 - Vina del Mar (Sausalito)
Mali 0
Nigeria 2 (Osimhen 56, Bamgboye 59)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 15,235. **Ref:** Oliver (Eng)
Mali: S Diarra - Dante, Bagayoko, Sangare, Maiga (Keita 70), M Diakite (M Haidara 60), Malle, B Traore, Fofana, A Haidara, Koita (M Diarra 74).
Nigeria: Udoh - Lazarus, Enogela, Zakari, Bamgboye (Alimi 90), Chukwueze (Okwonkwo 80), Osimhen, Nwakali, Ikwu, Anumudu, Ebere (Madueke 46).

Club football

AFRICA

CAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Final
1st leg
Oct 31
USM Alger (Alg) 1 (Seguer 88)
TP Mazembe (DRC) 2 (Kalaba 27, Samatta pen 79)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Grisha (Egy)
USM Alger: Zemmamouche - Boudebouda, Benmoussa, Benayada (Aoudia 70), Mazari (Chafai 51), Beldjilali (Seguer 46), Ferhat, Khoualed, Koudri, El Orfi, Nadji. *Sent off: El Orfi 67.*
TP Mazembe: Kidiaba - Kimwaki, Sinkala (Bokadi 72), Coulibaly, Frimpong, Diarra, Boateng, Traore, Kalaba, Ulimwengu (Nii Adjei 90+1), Samatta (Assale 86). *Sent off: Kalaba 45+1.*

2nd leg
Nov 8
TP Mazembe 2 (Samatta pen 74, Assale 90+5)
USM Alger 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Gassama (Gam)
TP Mazembe 4-1 on agg
TP Mazembe: Kidiaba - Boateng, Coulibaly, Sinkala (Nii Adjei 46), Kimwaki, Samatta, Diarra, Asante (Assale 46), Frimpong, Ulimwengu (Bolingi 77), Traore.
USM Alger: Mansouri - Abdellaoui, Chafai, Benmoussa (Nadji 67), Benkhemassa, Andriamatsinoro, Boudebouda, Benayada, Koudri, Aoudia (Beldjilali 46), Ferhat.
Sent off: Ferhat 90+5.

COMOROS

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Volcan Club (C)	4	3	0	1	6	2	9
Style Nouvel	4	2	0	2	3	4	6
Belle Lumiere	4	1	0	3	3	6	3

KENYA

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gor Mahia (C)	30	24	6	0	60	12	78
Ulinzi Stars	30	17	7	6	41	25	58
Sofapaka	30	12	11	7	39	39	47
Bandari	30	12	10	8	32	25	46
Tusker	30	12	8	10	46	28	44
Muhoroni Yth	30	11	11	8	31	36	44
Leopards	30	11	8	11	33	30	41
Ushuru	30	9	10	11	22	28	37
Mathare Utd	30	7	15	8	35	34	36
SoNy Sugar	30	9	8	13	23	26	35
Western Stima	30	9	8	13	25	31	35
Thika United	30	10	5	15	31	42	35
Chemelil Sugar	30	6	14	10	23	35	32
City Stars	30	6	10	14	25	37	28
KCB (R)	30	6	8	16	34	48	26
Nakuru (R)	30	4	11	15	34	58	23

MADAGASCAR

2015 – CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CNaPS (C)	3	3	0	0	8	2	9
3FB Toliara	3	0	2	1	3	4	2
Ajesaia	3	0	2	1	2	4	2
Iarivo	3	0	2	1	3	6	2

MOZAMBIQUE

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
F'viario M (C)	26	12	8	6	35	20	44
Costa do Sol	26	12	7	7	26	17	43
LD Maputo	26	12	7	7	26	12	43
Ferroviario B	26	11	6	9	24	21	39
HCB Songo	26	10	9	7	22	17	39
F'viario Nam'a	26	9	10	7	18	18	37
Maxaquene	26	10	6	10	21	21	36
F'viario Nac'a	26	9	7	10	17	15	34
Chibuto	26	8	10	8	24	20	34
ENH Vil'kulo	26	9	7	10	23	27	34
Dvo Maputo	26	7	9	10	17	25	30
1 de Maio (R)	26	6	11	9	17	25	29
Dvo Nacala (R)	26	6	9	11	16	27	27
F'viario Q (R)	26	3	10	13	9	30	19

NIGERIA

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enyimba (C)	38	19	13	6	48	27	70
Warri Wolves	38	19	9	10	62	29	66
Nasarawa Utd	38	18	9	11	46	35	63
Wikki Tourists	38	18	9	11	45	36	63
Giwa	38	17	12	9	44	41	63
Sunshine Stars	38	18	7	13	58	38	61
Heartland	38	17	5	16	46	40	56
Kano Pillars	38	16	7	15	45	39	55
Shooting Stars	38	15	8	15	39	39	53
Abia Warriors	38	16	5	17	39	43	53
Ifeanyi Ubah	38	14	8	16	37	40	50
Enugu Rangers	38	13	10	15	46	51	49
El Kanemi	38	14	7	17	38	56	49
Lobi Stars	38	11	14	13	34	39	47
Akwa United	38	13	8	17	33	43	47
Dolphins	38	11	12	15	38	40	45
Sharks[1] (R)	38	11	12	15	28	39	42
Kwara Utd (R)	38	12	6	20	32	46	42
Taraba (R)	38	9	10	19	30	47	37
Bayelsa Utd (R)	38	7	13	18	28	48	34

[1] *3pts deducted after team walked off the pitch in protest at a refereeing decision during round 36 fixture*

SUDAN

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Merreikh (C)	28	20	4	4	60	13	64
Al Hilal Omd'n	28	17	8	3	39	14	59
Al Ahli Sh'di	28	15	8	5	40	21	53
Khartoum	28	13	11	4	41	24	50
Merreikh El F	28	11	12	5	25	16	45
Al Hilal Ob'ed	28	11	8	9	29	23	41
Merreikh Kosti	28	9	9	10	26	30	36
Al Hilal El F	28	10	5	13	24	35	35
Al Ahli Wad M	28	8	10	10	23	29	34
Al Nsor	28	5	13	10	30	40	28
Al Ahli K'toum	28	7	7	14	26	39	28
Al Rabta	28	6	8	14	21	34	26
Al Amal	28	6	8	14	29	44	26
Al Hilal Kad'li	28	7	5	16	23	44	26
Al Merghani	28	4	6	18	11	41	18

ZAMBIA

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zesco Utd (C)	30	20	7	3	52	24	67
Zanaco	30	18	9	3	49	20	63
Power Dy'mos	30	17	6	7	36	21	57
Grn Buffaloes	30	14	9	7	32	25	51
Mufulira Wdrs	30	13	7	10	31	32	46
Red Arrows	30	10	13	7	30	28	43
Nkwazi	30	11	10	9	30	28	43
Nkana	30	11	8	11	30	26	41
Forest Rngrs	30	11	4	15	21	31	37
Green Eagles	30	9	9	12	31	33	36
Napsa Stars	30	8	8	14	17	28	32
N'la Leopards	30	6	13	11	17	23	31
Nchanga	30	7	9	14	26	33	30
Lusaka Dy'mos	30	7	8	15	27	41	29
Konkola B (R)	30	6	10	14	25	31	28
N Assembly (R)	30	5	4	21	20	50	19

EUROPE

BELARUS

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
BATE (C)	26	20	5	1	44	11	65
Dinamo Minsk	26	15	8	3	36	13	53
Shakhtyor	26	14	7	5	47	27	49
Belshina	26	12	7	7	39	19	43
Granit	26	12	6	8	30	32	42
Minsk	26	12	4	10	29	28	40
Torpedo Z	26	10	6	10	31	29	36
Neman	26	8	8	10	21	32	32
Naftan	26	8	6	12	34	35	30
Slavia	26	7	5	14	33	50	26
Slutsk	26	6	7	13	26	30	25
Dinamo Brest	26	7	3	16	23	42	24
Vitebsk	26	4	9	13	21	47	21
Gomel (R)	26	5	3	18	22	41	18

ESTONIA

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Flora (C)	36	27	3	6	72	24	84
Levadia	36	22	10	4	78	32	76
Kalju	36	22	5	9	69	36	71
Infonet	36	17	11	8	50	32	62
Sillamae	36	17	8	11	63	43	59
Trans	36	14	7	15	50	46	49
Paide	36	9	6	21	50	73	33
Parnu	36	6	8	22	38	87	26
Tammeka[1]	36	7	4	25	39	96	25
Tulevik (R)	36	6	4	26	35	75	22

[1] *Stay in top division after winning rel/prom play-off*

FINLAND

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SJK (C)	33	18	6	9	50	22	60
RoPS	33	17	8	8	44	29	59
HJK	33	16	10	7	45	30	58
Inter	33	13	10	10	45	35	49
Lahti	33	12	12	9	38	36	48
Mariehamn	33	11	12	10	30	36	45
HIFK	33	10	13	10	42	42	43
Ilves	33	11	7	15	32	48	40
KuPS	33	9	11	13	32	40	38
VPS	33	8	9	16	36	43	33
KTP (R)[1]	33	7	11	15	27	44	32
Jaro (R)	33	6	11	16	27	43	29

[1] *Relegated after losing rel/prom play-off*

KAZAKHSTAN

Division split after 22-round regular season; teams carried forward half their points (rounded up) but the rest of their record in full

2015 – CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Astana (C)	32	20	7	5	55	26	46
Kairat	32	20	7	5	60	19	45
Aktobe	32	15	9	8	35	25	32
Ordabasy	32	12	10	10	32	31	29
Atyrau	32	11	12	9	31	33	27
Irtysh	32	10	10	12	37	39	25

2015 – RELEGATION GROUP – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tobol	32	12	6	14	32	42	30
Okzhetpes	32	12	6	14	36	41	29
Taraz	32	10	8	14	25	33	26
Shakhter	32	9	5	18	27	47	23
Zhetysu[1]	32	8	6	18	28	46	22
Kaisar (R)	32	4	12	16	20	36	16

[1] *Stay in top division after winning rel/prom play-off*

LATVIA

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FK Liepaja (C)	24	15	7	2	48	23	52
Skonto	24	13	6	5	43	23	45
Ventspils	24	11	10	3	39	16	43
Jelgava	24	11	8	5	26	18	41
Spartaks	24	5	6	13	20	36	21
BFC Daug'pils	24	2	8	14	14	37	14
Metta/LU[1]	24	3	3	18	19	56	12
Gulbene[2] (R)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

[1] *Enter rel/prom play-off*
[2] *Expelled mid-season on suspicion of match-fixing; results expunged*

NORWAY

2015 – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosenborg (C)	30	21	6	3	73	27	69
Stromsgodset	30	17	6	7	67	44	57
Stabaek	30	17	5	8	54	43	56
Odd	30	15	10	5	61	41	55
Viking	30	17	2	11	53	39	53
Molde	30	15	7	8	62	31	52
Valerenga	30	14	7	9	49	41	49
Lillestrom[1]	30	12	9	9	45	43	44
Bodo/Glimt	30	12	4	14	53	56	40
Aalesund	30	11	5	14	42	57	38
Sarpsborg	30	8	10	12	37	49	34
Haugesund	30	8	7	15	33	52	31
Tromso	30	7	8	15	36	50	29
Start[2]	30	5	7	18	35	64	22
Mjondalen (R)	30	4	9	17	38	69	21
Sandefjord (R)	30	4	4	22	36	68	16

[1] *1pt deducted for not fulfilling licensing requirements*
[2] *Enter rel/prom play-off*

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

2015 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dundalk (C)	33	23	9	1	78	23	78
Cork	33	19	10	4	57	25	67
Shamrock	33	18	11	4	56	27	65
St Patrick's	33	18	4	11	52	34	58
Bohemians	33	15	8	10	49	42	53
Longford	33	10	9	14	41	53	39
Derry	33	9	8	16	32	42	35
Bray	33	9	6	18	27	51	33
Sligo	33	7	10	16	39	55	31
Galway	33	9	4	20	39	61	31
Limerick (R)[1]	33	7	8	18	46	73	29
Drogheda (R)	33	7	7	19	32	62	28

[1]*Relegated after losing rel/prom play-off*

SWEDEN

2015 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norrkoping (C)	30	20	6	4	60	33	66
Gothenburg	30	18	9	3	52	22	63
AIK	30	18	7	5	54	34	61
Elfsborg	30	16	7	7	59	42	55
Malmo	30	15	9	6	54	34	54
Djurgarden	30	14	9	7	52	37	51
Hacken	30	13	6	11	45	39	45
Helsingborg	30	11	4	15	43	45	37
Orebro	30	9	10	11	36	50	37
Gefle	30	10	6	14	35	50	36
Hammarby	30	8	9	13	35	39	33
Sundsvall	30	9	5	16	34	52	32
Kalmar	30	8	7	15	31	42	31
Falkenberg[1]	30	7	4	19	38	56	25
Halmstad (R)	30	4	9	17	21	44	21
Atvidaberg (R)	30	2	9	19	25	55	15

[1]*Stay in top division after winning rel/prom play-off*

SOUTH AMERICA

SUDAMERICANA CUP

Quarter-finals

1st legs - Oct 20-22; 2nd legs - Oct 27-29

Atletico Paranaense (Bra) v Sportivo Luqueno (Par)
1-0, 0-2 (agg 1-2)
Huracan (Arg) v Defensor Sporting (Uru)
1-0, 0-0 (agg 1-0)
Independiente (Arg) v Santa Fe (Col)
0-1, 1-1 (agg 1-2)
River Plate (Arg) v Chapecoense (Bra)
3-1, 1-2 (agg 4-3)

ARGENTINA

2015 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boca Jrs (C)	30	20	4	6	49	26	64
San Lorenzo	30	18	7	5	44	20	61
Rosario	30	16	11	3	47	26	59
Racing Club	30	16	9	5	40	23	57
Independiente	30	14	12	4	44	22	54
Belgrano	30	14	9	7	33	23	51
Estudiantes	30	14	9	7	34	28	51
Banfield	30	14	8	8	38	32	50
River Plate	30	13	10	7	46	33	49
Tigre	30	12	10	8	32	25	46
Quilmes	30	13	6	11	38	37	45
Gimnasia LP	30	12	8	10	41	38	44
Lanus	30	10	12	8	33	29	42
Union	30	9	14	7	38	37	41
Aldosivi	30	11	7	12	37	40	40
Newell's	30	10	10	10	27	30	40
San Martin	30	8	13	9	32	34	37
Olimpo	30	8	12	10	23	26	36
Colon	30	7	13	10	26	31	34
Argentinos Jrs	30	8	9	13	30	38	33
Def y Justicia	30	8	8	14	27	31	32
Godoy Cruz	30	8	8	14	32	40	32
Huracan	30	6	12	12	29	37	30
Sarmiento	30	7	9	14	24	34	30
Temperley	30	6	12	12	19	29	30
N Chicago (R)[1]	30	7	8	15	29	38	29
Velez Sarsfield	30	7	8	15	27	37	29
Arsenal	30	7	6	17	25	44	27
Atl Rafaela	30	4	11	15	29	51	23
Crucero N (R)[1]	30	3	5	22	21	55	14

[1]*Relegation determined by average points per game over 3 most recent seasons*

ASIA

AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Final

1st leg

Nov 7

Al Ahli (UAE) 0
Guangzhou Evergrande (Chn) 0
Att: 9,480. **Ref:** Kim Jong-hyeok (SKo)
Al Ahli: Mahmoud - Hussain, Khamis, Kwon, Sanqour (W Abbas 71), Everton Ribeiro (Assaidi 90), M Hassan, Al Fardan, Khalil (H A Abbas 89), Lima, Al Hammadi. *Sent off: Hussain 84.*
Guangzhou: Zeng Cheng - Zhang Linpeng, Mei Fang, Feng Xiaoting, Li Xuepeng (Zou Zheng 71), Paulinho, Zheng Zhi, Huang Bowen, Ricardo Goulart (Yu Hanchao 59), Zheng Long (Gao Lin 46), Elkeson.

2nd leg

Nov 21

Guangzhou Evergrande 1 (Elkeson 54)
Al Ahli 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 42,499. **Ref:** Irmatov (Uzb)
Guangzhou Evergrande1-0 on agg
Guangzhou: Zeng Cheng (Li Shuai 39) - Zhang Linpeng, Feng Xiaoting, Kim Young-gwon, Zou Zheng, Zheng Zhi, Paulinho, Huang Bowen, Ricardo Goulart (Gao Lin 90+1), Zheng Long (Liu Jian 87), Elkeson.
Al Ahli: Mahmoud - Sanqour, Khamis, Kwon, W Abbas, Everton Ribeiro, M Hassan (Sabeel Obeid 90+3), Al Fardan (H A Abbas 65), Lima, Khalil (Assaidi 63), Al Hammadi. *Sent off: Khamis 66.*

AFC CUP

Final

(single-leg tie)
Oct 31 - Dushanbe, Tajikistan
Istiklol (Taj) 0
Johor Darul Ta'zim (Mly) 1 (Velazquez 23)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** Tojo (Jap)

CHINA

2015 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gua'zhou E (C)	30	19	10	1	71	28	67
S'hai SIPG	30	19	8	3	63	35	65
Shandong	30	18	5	7	66	41	59
Beijing Guoan	30	16	8	6	46	26	56
Henan	30	12	10	8	35	30	46
S'hai Shenhua	30	12	6	12	42	44	42
Shijiazhuang	30	8	15	7	34	31	39
Chongqing	30	9	8	13	37	52	35
Jiangsu	30	9	8	13	39	48	35
Changchun	30	8	11	11	39	47	35
Hangzhou	30	8	9	13	27	35	33
Liaoning	30	7	10	13	30	46	31
Tianjin Teda	30	7	10	13	39	46	31
Gua'zhou R&F	30	8	7	15	35	41	31
Guizhou R (R)	30	7	8	15	39	52	29
S'hai S'xin (R)	30	4	5	21	30	70	17

KYRGYZSTAN

2015 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Alay (C)	20	16	2	2	48	18	50
Dordoi	20	13	3	4	60	22	42
Abdish-Ata	20	9	5	6	24	14	32
Alga	20	8	6	6	32	18	30
Ala-Too	20	4	1	15	17	42	13
KG United (R)	20	1	1	18	15	82	4

MYANMAR

2015 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yangon Utd (C)	22	17	3	2	61	28	54
Yadanarbon	22	14	4	4	53	30	46
Magwe	22	10	10	2	40	23	40
Ayeyawady	22	10	6	6	38	29	36
Kanbawza	22	10	5	7	38	33	35
Zwekapin	22	7	4	11	25	34	25
Hantharwady	22	5	9	8	25	26	24
Zeyar SM	22	5	8	9	30	38	23
Chin United	22	6	5	11	24	34	23
Rakhine Utd	22	6	3	13	27	47	21
Manaw M (R)	22	5	4	13	21	41	19
Nay Pyi T (R)	22	4	5	13	23	42	17

SINGAPORE

2015 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
B'nei DPMM (C)	27	15	7	5	48	26	52
Tampines Rvrs	27	14	6	7	42	25	48
Albirex N'gata	27	13	6	8	27	17	45
Balestier K'sa	27	12	8	7	39	35	44
Warriors	27	11	4	12	40	51	37
Home United	27	9	9	9	38	34	36
Harimau Muda	27	9	6	12	29	40	33
Geylang Intl	27	7	7	13	36	44	28
Young Lions	27	7	6	14	30	43	27
Hougang Utd	27	4	9	14	28	42	21

TAJIKISTAN

2015 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Istiklol (C)	18	16	2	0	69	5	50
Khujand	18	12	3	3	34	21	39
Ravshan	18	10	4	4	37	26	34
Regar-TadAZ	18	9	6	3	31	14	33
Khayr	18	8	5	5	21	26	29
CSKA Pomir	18	8	2	8	18	22	26
Barki Tajik	18	4	2	12	17	32	14
Vakhsh	18	3	4	11	11	34	13
Daleron-U'pa	18	3	3	12	16	36	12
Parvoz	18	1	1	16	6	44	4

UZBEKISTAN

2015 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pakhtakor (C)	30	24	3	3	66	23	75
Lokomotiv	30	23	5	2	66	22	74
Nasaf	30	19	5	6	46	20	62
Bunyodkor	30	18	5	7	44	19	59
Neftchi	30	16	4	10	41	30	52
Olmaliq	30	12	8	10	53	49	44
Mash'al	30	11	5	14	37	42	38
Navbahor	30	11	4	15	40	51	37
Metallurg	30	10	6	14	44	38	36
Qizilqum	30	10	4	16	38	49	34
Shurtan	30	8	9	13	42	53	33
Kokand 1912	30	9	4	17	31	52	31
Andijan	30	8	4	18	27	56	28
Buxoro	30	7	5	18	31	53	26
Sogdiana[1]	30	8	2	20	31	60	26
Dinamo (R)	30	6	7	17	28	48	25

[1]*Enter rel/prom play-off*

OCEANIA

OFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Preliminary round group

Kiwi (Soa), Tupapa Maraerenga (Coo), Utulei Youth (AmS), Veitongo (Ton)

● *To be played in the Cook Islands, Jan 26-30, 2016; the winner will qualify for the group stage*

Group stage draw

Group A

Amicale (Van), Auckland City (NZ), Lae City Dwellers (PNG), *Solomon Islands champions*

Group B

Hekari United (PNG), Lossi (NC), Suva (Fij), Team Wellington (NZ)

Group C

Magenta (NC), Nadi (Fij), Tefana (Tah), *preliminary round group winner*

● *To be played in New Zealand, Apr 9-17, 2016; the 3 group winners and the runner-up with the best record will qualify for the semi-finals*

CONCACAF

CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Quarter-finals draw

Los Angeles Galaxy (USA) v Santos Laguna (Mex)
Queretaro (Mex) v DC United (USA)
Seattle Sounders (USA) v America (Mex)
Tigres (Mex) v Real Salt Lake (USA)
1st legs - Feb 23-25; 2nd legs - Mar1-3, 2016

KEY TO TABLES
(C) = champions
(R) = relegated
(Q) = qualified for next stage

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EDITORIAL
Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU
Tel: +44 (0) 20 3148 4817
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ADVERTISING AND SPONSORSHIP
Tadeyo Akitoye, Richard Torey
Tel: +44 (0) 20 3148 2515
+44 (0) 20 3148 2823
E-mail: tadeyo.akitoye@timeinc.com, richard.torey@timeinc.com

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GOALKEEPERS
24 Ioannis **GELIOS** (Gre) (23) 24.04.92
35 Marwin **HITZ** (Swi) (28) 18.09.87
1 Alex **MANNINGER** (Aut) (38) 04.06.77
28 Yannik **OTTL** (18) 19.11.96

DEFENDERS
18 Jan-Ingwer **CALLSEN-BRACKER** (31) 23.09.84
32 Raphael **FRAMBERGER** (20) 06.09.95
20 **HONG** Jeong-ho (SKo) (26) 12.08.89
16 Christoph **JANKER** (30) 14.02.85
5 Ragnar **KLAVAN** (Est) (30) 30.10.85
31 Philipp **MAX** (22) 30.09.93
4 Daniel **OPARE** (Gha) (25) 18.10.90
40 Tim **RIEDER** (22) 03.09.93
3 Kostas **STAFYLIDIS** (Gre) (21) 02.12.93
39 Maik **UHDE** (23) 23.05.94
2 Paul **VERHAEGH** (Hol) (32) 01.09.83

MIDFIELDERS
7 Halil **ALTINTOP** (Tur) (32) 08.12.82
10 Daniel **BAIER** (31) 18.05.84
30 **CAIUBY** (Bra) (27) 14.07.88
37 Arif **EKIN** (Tur) (20) 14.09.95
11 Alexander **ESSWEIN** (25) 25.03.90
8 Markus **FEULNER** (33) 12.02.82
21 Dominik **KOHR** (21) 31.01.94
19 **KOO** Ja-cheol (SKo) (26) 27.02.89
26 Bastian **KURZ** (19) 23.09.96
14 Jan **MORAVEK** (CzR) (26) 01.11.89
9 Shawn **PARKER** (22) 07.03.93
36 Max **REINTHALER** (Ita) (20) 22.03.95
29 Marco **SCHUSTER** (20) 10.10.95
15 Piotr **TROCHOWSKI** (31) 22.03.84
13 Tobias **WERNER** (30) 19.07.85

FORWARDS
25 Raul **BOBADILLA** (Par) (28) 18.06.87
22 **JI** Dong-won (SKo) (24) 28.05.91
23 Tim **MATAVZ** (Sln) (26) 13.01.89
33 Sascha **MOLDERS** (30) 20.03.85

COACH
Markus **WEINZIERL** (40) 28.12.74

BAYER LEVERKUSEN

GOALKEEPERS
25 Dario **KRESIC** (Cro) (31) 11.01.84
1 Bernd **LENO** (23) 04.03.92
22 David **YELLDELL** (USA) (34) 01.10.81

DEFENDERS
34 Robin **BECKER** (18) 18.01.97
33 Lukas **BOEDER** (18) 18.04.97
17 Sebastian **BOENISCH** (Pol) (28) 01.02.87
26 Giulio **DONATI** (Ita) (25) 05.02.90
13 Roberto **HILBERT** (31) 16.10.84
16 Tin **JEDVAJ** (Cro) (20) 28.11.95
5 Kyriakos **PAPADOPOULOS** (Gre) (23) 23.02.92
4 Jonathan **TAH** (19) 11.02.96
21 Omer **TOPRAK** (Tur) (26) 21.07.89
18 **WENDELL** (Bra) (22) 20.07.93

MIDFIELDERS
20 Charles **ARANGUIZ** (Chl) (26) 17.04.89
38 Karim **BELLARABI** (25) 08.04.90
8 Lars **BENDER** (26) 27.04.89
19 Julian **BRANDT** (19) 02.05.96
10 Hakan **CALHANOGLU** (Tur) (21) 08.02.94
37 Marlon **FREY** (19) 24.03.96
39 Benjamin **HENRICHS** (18) 23.02.97
44 Kevin **KAMPL** (Sln) (25) 09.10.90
23 Christoph **KRAMER** (24) 19.02.91
2 Andre **RAMALHO** (Bra) (23) 16.02.92
24 **RYU** Seung-woo (SKo) (21) 17.12.93
35 Vladlen **YURCHENKO** (Ukr) (21) 22.01.94

FORWARDS
7 Javier **HERNANDEZ** (Mex) (27) 01.06.88
11 Stephan **KIESSLING** (31) 25.01.84
14 Admir **MEHMEDI** (Swi) (24) 16.03.91

COACH
Roger **SCHMIDT** (48) 13.03.67

BAYERN MUNICH

GOALKEEPERS
33 Ivan **LUCIC** (Aut) (20) 23.03.95
1 Manuel **NEUER** (29) 27.03.86
22 Tom **STARKE** (34) 18.03.81
26 Sven **ULREICH** (27) 03.08.88

DEFENDERS
27 David **ALABA** (Aut) (23) 24.06.92
28 Holger **BADSTUBER** (26) 13.03.89
5 Mehdi **BENATIA** (Mor) (28) 17.04.87
18 Juan **BERNAT** (Spa) (22) 01.03.93
17 Jerome **BOATENG** (27) 03.09.88
15 Jan **KIRCHHOFF** (25) 01.10.90
21 Philipp **LAHM** (32) 11.11.83
13 **RAFINHA** (Bra) (30) 07.09.85
39 Philipp **STEINHART** (23) 07.07.92

MIDFIELDERS
14 Xabi **ALONSO** (Spa) (34) 25.11.81
40 Fabian **BENKO** (17) 05.06.98
11 Douglas **COSTA** (Bra) (25) 14.09.90
16 Gianluca **GAUDINO** (19) 11.11.96
19 Mario **GOTZE** (23) 03.06.92
32 Joshua **KIMMICH** (20) 08.02.95
8 Javi **MARTINEZ** (Spa) (27) 02.09.88
7 Franck **RIBERY** (Fra) (32) 01.04.83
20 Sebastian **RODE** (25) 11.10.90
6 **THIAGO** Alcantara (Spa) (24) 11.04.91
23 Arturo **VIDAL** (Chl) (28) 22.05.87

FORWARDS
29 Kingsley **COMAN** (Fra) (19) 13.06.96
37 Julian **GREEN** (USA) (20) 06.06.95
24 Sinan **KURT** (19) 23.07.96
9 Robert **LEWANDOWSKI** (Pol) (27) 21.08.88
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6 Sven **BENDER** (26) 27.04.89
27 Gonzalo **CASTRO** (28) 11.06.87
8 Ilkay **GUNDOGAN** (25) 24.10.90
7 Jonas **HOFMANN** (23) 14.07.92
9 Adnan **JANUZAJ** (Blg) (20) 05.02.95
23 Shinji **KAGAWA** (Jap) (26) 17.03.89
14 Moritz **LEITNER** (22) 08.12.92
10 Henrikh **MKHITARYAN** (Arm) (26) 21.01.89
18 Nuri **SAHIN** (Tur) (27) 05.09.88
45 David **SAUERLAND** (18) 28.06.97
35 Pascal **STENZEL** (19) 20.03.96
33 Julian **WEIGL** (20) 08.09.95

FORWARDS
17 Pierre-Emerick **AUBAMEYANG** (Gab) (26) 18.06.89
20 Adrian **RAMOS** (Col) (29) 22.01.86
11 Marco **REUS** (26) 31.05.89

COACH
Thomas **TUCHEL** (42) 29.08.73

HANOVER

GOALKEEPERS
40 Timo **KONIGSMANN** (18) 05.04.97
30 Samuel **RADLINGER** (Aut) (23) 07.11.92
13 Philipp **TSCHAUNER** (30) 03.11.85
1 Ron-Robert **ZIELER** (26) 12.02.89

DEFENDERS
3 Miiko **ALBORNOZ** (Chl) (25) 30.11.90
31 Waldemar **ANTON** (19) 20.07.96
20 **FELIPE** (Bra) (28) 15.05.87
25 **MARCELO** (Bra) (28) 20.05.87
27 Vladimir **RANKOVIC** (22) 27.06.93
4 Hiroki **SAKAI** (Jap) (25) 12.04.90
5 Salif **SANE** (Sen) (25) 25.08.90
19 Christian **SCHULZ** (32) 01.04.83
29 Oliver **SORG** (25) 29.05.90
37 Niklas **TEICHGRABER** (19) 07.02.96

MIDFIELDERS
2 Leon **ANDREASEN** (Den) (32) 23.04.83
33 Mike-Steven **BAHRE** (20) 10.08.95
17 Uffe **BECH** (Den) (22) 13.01.93
34 Tim **DIERSSEN** (19) 15.01.96
36 Sebastian **ERNST** (20) 04.03.95
6 Ceyhun **GULSELAM** (Tur) (27) 25.12.87
23 Maurice **HIRSCH** (22) 30.05.93
15 Andre **HOFFMANN** (22) 28.02.93
26 Kenan **KARAMAN** (Tur) (21) 05.03.94
10 Hiroshi **KIYOTAKE** (Jap) (26) 12.11.89
11 Felix **KLAUS** (23) 13.09.92
7 Edgar **PRIB** (25) 15.12.89
8 Manuel **SCHMIEDEBACH** (26) 05.12.88
38 Valmir **SULEJMANI** (Alb) (19) 01.02.96

FORWARDS
35 Charlison **BENSCHOP** (Hol) (26) 21.08.89
39 Mevlut **ERDINC** (Tur) (28) 25.02.87
14 Allan **SAINT-MAXIMIN** (Fra) (18) 12.03.97
9 Artur **SOBIECH** (Pol) (25) 12.06.90

COACH
Michael **FRONTZECK** (51) 26.03.64

HERTHA BERLIN

GOALKEEPERS
35 Marius **GERSBECK** (20) 20.06.95
22 Rune **JARSTEIN** (Nor) (31) 29.09.84
29 Nils-Jonathan **KORBER** (19) 13.11.96
1 Thomas **KRAFT** (27) 22.07.88

DEFENDERS
38 Nico **BEYER** (19) 22.11.96
25 John **BROOKS** (USA) (22) 28.01.93
15 Sebastian **LANGKAMP** (27) 15.01.88
28 Fabian **LUSTENBERGER** (Swi) (27) 02.05.88
34 Maximilian **MITTELSTADT** (18) 18.03.97
2 Peter **PEKARIK** (Slk) (29) 30.10.86
21 Marvin **PLATTENHARDT** (23) 26.01.92
39 Yanni **REGASEL** (19) 13.01.96
23 Johannes **VAN DEN BERGH** (29) 21.11.86

MIDFIELDERS
9 Alexander **BAUMJOHANN** (28) 23.01.87
27 Roy **BEERENS** (Hol) (27) 22.12.87
10 Anis **BEN-HATIRA** (Tun) (27) 18.07.88
17 Tolga **CIGERCI** (23) 23.03.92
6 Vladimir **DARIDA** (CzR) (25) 08.08.90
24 Genki **HARAGUCHI** (Jap) (24) 09.05.91
13 Jens **HEGELER** (27) 22.01.88
31 Florian **KOHLS** (20) 03.04.95
12 **RONNY** (Bra) (29) 11.05.86
3 Per Ciljan **SKJELBREID** (Nor) (28) 16.06.87
5 Niklas **STARK** (20) 14.04.95
14 Valentin **STOCKER** (Swi) (26) 12.04.89
20 Mitchell **WEISER** (21) 21.04.94

FORWARDS
11 Sami **ALLAGUI** (Tun) (29) 28.05.86
19 Vedad **IBISEVIC** (Bos) (31) 06.08.84
8 Salomon **KALOU** (IvC) (30) 05.08.85
16 Julian **SCHIEBER** (26) 13.02.89

COACH
Pal **DARDAI** (Hun) (39) 16.03.76

HOFFENHEIM

GOALKEEPERS
1 Oliver **BAUMANN** (25) 02.06.90
13 Jens **GRAHL** (27) 22.09.88
33 Alexander **STOLZ** (32) 13.10.83

DEFENDERS
4 Ermin **BICAKCIC** (Bos) (25) 24.01.90
32 Benedikt **GIMBER** (18) 19.02.97
3 Pavel **KADERABEK** (CzR) (23) 25.04.92
20 **KIM** Jin-su (SKo) (23) 13.06.92
21 Nicolai **RAPP** (18) 13.12.96
5 Fabian **SCHAR** (Swi) (23) 20.12.91
12 Tobias **STROBL** (25) 12.05.90
25 Niklas **SULE** (20) 03.09.95
15 Jeremy **TOLJAN** (21) 08.08.94

MIDFIELDERS
18 Nadiem **AMIRI** (19) 27.10.96
14 Tarik **ELYOUNOUSSI** (Nor) (27) 23.02.88
11 Jiloan **HAMAD** (Swe) (25) 06.11.90
38 Kai **HERDLING** (31) 27.06.84
30 Philipp **OCHS** (18) 17.04.97
8 Eugen **POLANSKI** (Pol) (29) 17.03.86
6 Sebastian **RUDY** (25) 28.02.90
10 Jonathan **SCHMID** (Fra) (25) 26.06.90
16 Pirmin **SCHWEGLER** (Swi) (28) 09.03.87
17 Steven **ZUBER** (Swi) (24) 17.08.91

FORWARDS
40 **JOELINTON** (Bra) (19) 14.08.96
22 Kevin **KURANYI** (33) 02.03.82
28 Adam **SZALAI** (Hun) (27) 09.12.87
19 Mark **UTH** (24) 24.08.91
9 Eduardo **VARGAS** (Chl) (26) 20.11.89
31 Kevin **VOLLAND** (23) 30.07.92

COACH
Markus **GISDOL** (62) 29.11.53

INGOLSTADT

GOALKEEPERS
26 Orjan **NYLAND** (Nor) (25) 10.09.90
39 Christian **ORTAG** (20) 14.01.95
1 Ramazan **OZCAN** (Aut) (31) 28.06.84

DEFENDERS
18 Roman **BREGERIE** (Fra) (29) 09.08.86
21 Danny **DA COSTA** (22) 13.07.93
15 **DANILO** (Bra) (24) 29.10.91
20 Konstantin **ENGEL** (Kaz) (27) 27.07.88
5 Benjamin **HUBNER** (26) 04.07.89
28 Tobias **LEVELS** (29) 22.11.86
34 Marvin **MATIP** (Cam) (30) 25.09.85
29 Markus **SUTTNER** (Aut) (28) 16.04.87
13 Michael **ZANT** (20) 15.07.95

MIDFIELDERS
23 Robert **BAUER** (20) 09.04.95
19 Max **CHRISTIANSEN** (19) 25.09.96
36 Almog **COHEN** (Isr) (27) 01.09.88
10 Pascal **GROSS** (24) 15.06.91
14 Stefan **LEX** (26) 27.11.89
6 Alfredo **MORALES** (USA) (25) 12.05.90
31 Maurice **MULTHAUP** (18) 15.12.96
30 Thomas **PLEDL** (21) 23.05.94
8 **ROGER** (Bra) (30) 10.08.85
22 Stefan **WANNENWETSCH** (23) 19.01.92

FORWARDS
9 Moritz **HARTMANN** (29) 20.06.86
16 Lukas **HINTERSEER** (Aut) (24) 28.03.91
25 Elias **KACHUNGA** (23) 22.04.92
7 Matthew **LECKIE** (Aus) (24) 04.02.91
11 Tomas **PEKHART** (CzR) (26) 26.05.89

COACH
Ralph **HASENHUTTL** (Aut) (48) 09.08.67

MAINZ

GOALKEEPERS
23 Gianluca **CURCI** (Ita) (30) 12.07.85
33 Jannik **HUTH** (21) 15.04.94
1 Loris **KARIUS** (22) 22.06.93

DEFENDERS
3 Leon **BALOGUN** (Nga) (27) 28.06.88
16 Stefan **BELL** (24) 24.08.91
7 Pierre **BENGTSSON** (Swe) (27) 12.04.88
18 Daniel **BROSINSKI** (27) 17.07.88
26 Niko **BUNGERT** (29) 24.10.86
24 Gaetan **BUSSMANN** (Fra) (24) 02.02.91
42 Alexander **HACK** (22) 08.09.93
2 Gonzalo **JARA** (Chl) (30) 29.08.85
5 Henrique **SERENO** (Por) (30) 18.05.85

MIDFIELDERS
14 Julian **BAUMGARTLINGER** (Aut) (27) 02.01.88
27 Christian **CLEMENS** (24) 04.08.91
20 Fabian **FREI** (Swi) (26) 08.01.89
17 **JAIRO** (Spa) (22) 11.07.93
47 Philipp **KLEMENT** (23) 09.09.92
6 Danny **LATZA** (25) 07.12.89
10 Yunus **MALLI** (Tur) (23) 24.02.92
8 Christoph **MORITZ** (25) 27.01.90
28 Todor **NEDELEV** (Bul) (22) 07.02.93
30 Patrick **PFLUCKE** (19) 30.11.96
45 Suat **SERDAR** (18) 11.04.97
19 Elkin **SOTO** (Col) (35) 04.08.80
25 Niki **ZIMLING** (Den) (30) 19.04.85

FORWARDS
11 Maximilian **BEISTER** (25) 06.09.90
15 Jhon **CORDOBA** (Col) (22) 10.05.93
32 Pablo **DE BLASIS** (Arg) (27) 04.02.88
48 Julian-Maurice **DERSTROFF** (23) 05.01.92
9 Yoshinori **MUTO** (Jap) (23) 15.07.92
31 Florian **NIEDERLECHNER** (25) 24.10.90
29 Devante **PARKER** (19) 16.03.96

COACH
Martin **SCHMIDT** (Swi) (48) 12.04.67

BOR M'GLADBACH

GOALKEEPERS
33 Christofer **HEIMEROTH** (34) 01.08.81
21 Tobias **SIPPEL** (27) 22.03.88
1 Yann **SOMMER** (Swi) (26) 17.12.88

DEFENDERS
4 Roel **BROUWERS** (Hol) (33) 28.11.81
3 Andreas **CHRISTENSEN** (Den) (19) 10.04.96
15 Alvaro **DOMINGUEZ** (Spa) (26) 16.05.89
30 Nico **ELVEDI** (Swi) (19) 30.09.96
24 Tony **JANTSCHKE** (25) 07.04.90
19 Fabian **JOHNSON** (USA) (27) 11.12.87
14 Nico **SCHULZ** (22) 01.04.93
39 Martin **STRANZL** (Aut) (35) 16.06.80
17 Oscar **WENDT** (Swe) (30) 24.10.85

MIDFIELDERS
8 Mahmoud **DAHOUD** (19) 01.01.96
28 Andre **HAHN** (25) 13.08.90
10 Thorgan **HAZARD** (Blg) (22) 29.03.93
7 Patrick **HERRMANN** (24) 12.02.91
27 Julian **KORB** (23) 21.03.92
6 Havard **NORDTVEIT** (Nor) (25) 21.06.90
18 Marvin **SCHULZ** (20) 15.01.95
13 Lars **STINDL** (27) 26.08.88
16 Ibrahima **TRAORE** (Gui) (27) 21.04.88
34 Granit **XHAKA** (Swi) (23) 27.09.92

FORWARDS
9 Josip **DRMIC** (Swi) (23) 08.08.92
31 Branimir **HRGOTA** (Swe) (22) 12.01.93
11 **RAFFAEL** (Bra) (30) 28.03.85
36 Marlon **RITTER** (21) 15.10.94

COACH
Andre **SCHUBERT** (44) 24.07.71

COLOGNE

GOALKEEPERS
1 Timo **HORN** (22) 12.05.93
18 Thomas **KESSLER** (29) 20.01.86
37 Daniel **MESENHOLER** (20) 24.07.95

DEFENDERS
14 Jonas **HECTOR** (25) 27.05.90
3 Dominique **HEINTZ** (22) 15.08.93
24 Lukas **KLUNTER** (19) 26.05.96
5 Dominic **MAROH** (Sln) (28) 04.03.87
19 Mergim **MAVRAJ** (Alb) (29) 09.06.86
16 Pawel **OLKOWSKI** (Pol) (25) 13.02.90
4 Frederik **SORENSEN** (Den) (23) 14.04.92

MIDFIELDERS
21 Leonardo **BITTENCOURT** (21) 19.12.93
31 Yannick **GERHARDT** (21) 13.03.94
8 Milos **JOJIC** (Ser) (23) 19.03.92
33 Mathias **LEHMANN** (32) 28.05.83
25 Kazuki **NAGASAWA** (Jap) (23) 16.12.91
7 Marcel **RISSE** (25) 17.12.89
29 Dusan **SVENTO** (Slk) (30) 01.08.85
6 Kevin **VOGT** (24) 23.09.91

FORWARDS
26 Bard **FINNE** (Nor) (20) 13.02.95
15 Philipp **HOSINER** (Aut) (26) 15.05.89
27 Anthony **MODESTE** (Fra) (27) 14.04.88
13 Yuya **OSAKO** (Jap) (25) 18.05.90
11 Simon **ZOLLER** (24) 26.06.91

COACH
Peter **STOGER** (Aut) (49) 11.04.66

DARMSTADT

GOALKEEPERS
31 Christian **MATHENIA** (23) 31.03.92
1 Patrick **PLATINS** (32) 19.04.83
40 Lukasz **ZALUSKA** (Pol) (33) 16.06.82

DEFENDERS
33 Luca **CALDIROLA** (Ita) (24) 01.02.91
15 Junior **DIAZ** (CR) (32) 12.09.83
13 Gyorgy **GARICS** (Aut) (31) 08.03.84
5 Benjamin **GORKA** (31) 15.04.84
32 Fabian **HOLLAND** (25) 11.07.90
35 Slobodan **RAJKOVIC** (Ser) (26) 03.02.89
34 Konstantin **RAUSCH** (25) 15.03.90
17 Sandro **SIRIGU** (27) 07.10.88
3 Michael **STEGMAYER** (30) 12.01.85
4 Aytac **SULU** (Tur) (29) 11.12.85
39 Noel **WEMBACHER** (18) 15.03.97

MIDFIELDER
36 Jan **FINGER** (18) 02.01.97
8 Jerome **GONDORF** (27) 26.06.88
20 Marcel **HELLER** (29) 19.01.86
27 Milan **IVANA** (Slk) (32) 26.11.83
23 Florian **JUNGWIRTH** (26) 27.01.89
37 Ali **KAZIMI** (Afg) (18) 30.06.97
11 Tobias **KEMPE** (26) 27.06.89
18 Peter **NIEMEYER** (32) 22.11.83
10 Jan **ROSENTHAL** (29) 07.04.86
25 Yannick **STARK** (25) 28.10.90
38 Nick **VOLK** (18) 12.11.97
6 Mario **VRANCIC** (Bos) (26) 23.05.89

FORWARDS
7 Marco **SAILER** (30) 16.11.85
9 Dominik **STROH-ENGEL** (30) 27.11.85
14 Sandro **WAGNER** (28) 29.11.87

COACH
Dirk **SCHUSTER** (47) 29.12.67

E FRANKFURT

GOALKEEPERS
29 Emil **BALAYEV** (Aze) (21) 17.04.94
1 Lukas **HRADECKY** (Fin) (26) 24.11.89
13 Heinz **LINDNER** (Aut) (25) 17.07.90
33 Yannick **ZUMMACK** (19) 26.03.96

DEFENDERS
19 David **ABRAHAM** (Arg) (29) 16.07.86
23 Anderson **BAMBA** (Bra) (27) 10.01.88
22 Timmy **CHANDLER** (USA) (25) 29.03.90
15 Constant **DJAKPA** (IvC) (29) 17.10.86
31 David **KINSOMBI** (19) 12.12.95
6 Bastian **OCZIPKA** (26) 12.01.89
4 Marco **RUSS** (30) 04.08.85
5 Carlos **ZAMBRANO** (Per) (26) 10.07.89

MIDFIELDERS
16 Stefan **AIGNER** (28) 20.08.87
18 Johannes **FLUM** (27) 25.02.88
11 Mijat **GACINOVIC** (Bos) (20) 08.02.95
32 Joel **GEREZGIHER** (20) 09.10.95
20 Makoto **HASEBE** (Jap) (31) 18.01.84
27 Aleksandar **IGNJOVSKI** (Ser) (24) 27.01.91
28 Sonny **KITTEL** (22) 06.01.93
25 Slobodan **MEDOJEVIC** (Ser) (25) 20.10.90
7 Stefan **REINARTZ** (26) 01.01.89
21 Marc **STENDERA** (19) 10.12.95

FORWARDS
38 Enis **BUNJAKI** (18) 17.10.97
30 Luc **CASTAIGNOS** (Hol) (23) 27.02.92
10 Vaclav **KADLEC** (CzR) (23) 20.05.92
14 Alexander **MEIER** (32) 17.01.83
9 Haris **SEFEROVIC** (Swi) (23) 22.02.92
24 Luca **WALDSCHMIFT** (19) 19.05.96

COACH
Armin **VEH** (54) 01.02.61

HAMBURG

GOALKEEPERS
15 Rene **ADLER** (30) 15.01.85
1 Jaroslav **DROBNY** (CzR) (36) 18.10.79
30 Andreas **HIRZEL** (Swi) (22) 25.03.93
36 Tom **MICKEL** (26) 19.04.89

DEFENDERS
3 **CLEBER** (Bra) (24) 05.12.90
2 Dennis **DIEKMEIER** (26) 20.10.89
5 Johan **DJOUROU** (Swi) (28) 18.01.87
39 Ashton **GOTZ** (22) 16.07.93
28 Gideon **JUNG** (21) 12.09.94
31 Ronny **MARCOS** (Moz) (22) 01.10.93
22 Matthias **OSTRZOLEK** (25) 05.06.90
24 Gotoku **SAKAI** (Jap) (24) 14.03.91
4 Emir **SPAHIC** (Bos) (35) 18.08.80

MIDFIELDERS
12 Ahmet **ARSLAN** (21) 30.03.94
21 Marcelo **DIAZ** (Chl) (28) 30.12.86
20 Albin **EKDAL** (Swe) (26) 28.07.89
8 Lewis **HOLTBY** (25) 18.09.90
14 Aaron **HUNT** (29) 04.09.86
7 Ivo **ILICEVIC** (Cro) (29) 14.11.86
40 Gojko **KACAR** (Ser) (28) 26.01.87
27 Nicolai **MULLER** (28) 25.09.87
34 Finn **PORATH** (18) 23.02.97
17 Zoltan **STIEBER** (Hun) (27) 16.10.88

FORWARDS
33 Batuhan **ALTINTAS** (Tur) (19) 14.03.96
23 Michael **GREGORITSCH** (Aut) (21) 18.04.94
10 Pierre-Michel **LASOGGA** (23) 15.12.91
26 Philipp **MULLER** (20) 03.03.95
11 Ivica **OLIC** (Cro) (36) 14.09.79
16 Artjoms **RUDNEVS** (Lat) (27) 13.01.88
9 Sven **SCHIPPLOCK** (27) 08.11.88

COACH
Bruno **LABBADIA** (49) 08.02.66

SCHALKE

GOALKEEPERS
1 Ralf **FAHRMANN** (27) 27.09.88
34 Fabian **GIEFER** (25) 17.05.90
30 Michael **GSPURNING** (Aut) (34) 02.05.81
35 Alexander **NUBEL** (19) 30.09.96

DEFENDERS
24 Kaan **AYHAN** (Tur) (21) 10.11.94
3 Junior **CAICARA** (Bra) (26) 27.04.89
2 Marvin **FRIEDRICH** (19) 13.12.95
4 Benedikt **HOWEDES** (27) 29.02.88
20 Thilo **KEHRER** (19) 21.09.96
6 Sead **KOLASINAC** (Bos) (22) 20.06.93
32 Joel **MATIP** (Cam) (24) 08.08.91
31 Matija **NASTASIC** (Ser) (22) 28.03.93
27 Sascha **RIETHER** (32) 23.03.83
28 Felipe **SANTANA** (Bra) (29) 17.03.86
22 Atsuto **UCHIDA** (Jap) (27) 27.03.88

MIDFIELDERS
15 Dennis **AOGO** (28) 14.01.87
- Kevin-Prince **BOATENG** (Gha) (28) 06.03.87
5 Johannes **GEIS** (22) 07.08.93
8 Leon **GORETZKA** (20) 06.02.95
12 Marco **HOGER** (26) 16.09.89
23 Pierre-Emile **HOJBJERG** (Den) (20) 05.08.95
7 Max **MEYER** (20) 18.09.95
33 Roman **NEUSTADTER** (27) 18.02.88
18 Sidney **SAM** (27) 31.01.88
19 Leroy **SANE** (19) 11.01.96

FORWARDS
13 Maxim **CHOUPO-MOTING** (Cam) (26) 23.03.89
9 Franco **DI SANTO** (Arg) (26) 07.04.89
25 Klaas-Jan **HUNTELAAR** (Hol) (32) 12.08.83
36 Felix **PLATTE** (19) 11.02.96

COACH
Andre **BREITENREITER** (42) 02.10.73

STUTTGART

GOALKEEPERS
1 Mitchell **LANGERAK** (Aus) (27) 22.08.88
22 Przemyslaw **TYTON** (Pol) (28) 04.01.87
32 Benjamin **UPHOFF** (22) 08.08.93
17 Odisseas **VLACHODIMOS** (Gre) (21) 26.04.94

DEFENDERS
5 Timo **BAUMGARTL** (19) 04.03.96
14 Philip **HEISE** (24) 20.06.91
2 Emiliano **INSUA** (Arg) (26) 07.01.89
16 Florian **KLEIN** (Aut) (28) 17.11.86
6 Georg **NIEDERMEIER** (29) 26.02.86
41 Stephen **SAMA** (22) 05.03.93
3 Daniel **SCHWAAB** (27) 23.08.88
4 Toni **SUNJIC** (Bos) (26) 15.12.88

MIDFIELDERS
10 Daniel **DIDAVI** (25) 21.02.90
26 Serey **DIE** (IvC) (31) 07.11.84
31 Arianit **FERATI** (18) 07.09.97
20 Christian **GENTNER** (30) 14.08.85
11 Carlos **GRUEZO** (Ecu) (20) 19.04.95
21 Adam **HLOUSEK** (CzR) (26) 20.12.88
42 Jerome **KIESEWETTER** (USA) (22) 09.02.93
39 Jan **KLIMENT** (CzR) (22) 01.09.93
44 Alexandru **MAXIM** (Rom) (25) 08.07.90
27 Mart **RISTL** (19) 07.07.96
8 Lukas **RUPP** (24) 08.01.91
28 Marvin **WANITZEK** (22) 07.05.93

FORWARDS
33 Daniel **GINCZEK** (24) 13.04.91
7 Martin **HARNIK** (Aut) (28) 10.06.87
18 Filip **KOSTIC** (Ser) (23) 01.11.92
9 Robbie **KRUSE** (Aus) (27) 05.10.88
19 Timo **WERNER** (19) 06.03.96

COACH
(vacant)

WERDER BREMEN

GOALKEEPERS
42 Felix **WIEDWALD** (25) 15.03.90
1 Raphael **WOLF** (27) 06.06.88
30 Michael **ZETTERER** (20) 12.07.95

DEFENDERS
38 Marnon **BUSCH** (20) 08.12.94
4 Alex **GALVEZ** (Spa) (26) 06.06.89
2 Santiago **GARCIA** (Arg) (27) 08.07.88
20 Ulisses **GARCIA** (Swi) (19) 11.01.96
23 Theodor **GEBRE SELASSIE** (CzR) (28) 24.12.86
25 Oliver **HUSING** (22) 17.02.93
5 Assani **LUKIMYA** (DRC) (29) 25.01.86
15 Mateo **PAVLOVIC** (Cro) (25) 09.06.90
37 Janek **STERNBERG** (23) 19.10.92
7 Jannik **VESTERGAARD** (Den) (23) 03.08.92
19 Luca **ZANDER** (20) 09.08.95

MIDFIELDERS
10 Levent **AYCICEK** (21) 12.02.94
44 Philipp **BARGFREDE** (26) 03.03.89
22 Fin **BARTELS** (28) 07.02.87
35 Maximilian **EGGESTEIN** (18) 08.12.96
8 Clemens **FRITZ** (34) 07.12.80
39 Lukas **FRODE** (20) 23.01.95
33 Marcel **HILSSNER** (20) 30.01.95
16 Zlatko **JUNUZOVIC** (Aut) (28) 26.09.87
18 Felix **KROOS** (24) 12.03.91
11 Levin **OZTUNALI** (19) 15.03.96
26 Julian **VON HAACKE** (21) 14.02.94
17 Ozkan **YILDIRIM** (22) 10.04.93

FORWARDS
27 Florian **GRILLITSCH** (Aut) (20) 07.08.95
9 Aron **JOHANNSSON** (USA) (25) 10.11.90
28 Melvyn **LORENZEN** (21) 26.11.94
14 Claudio **PIZARRO** (Per) (37) 03.10.78
21 Anthony **UJAH** (Nga) (25) 20.11.90

COACH
Viktor **SKRYPNYK** (Ukr) (46) 19.11.69

Hot shot... Anthony Ujah

WOLFSBURG

GOALKEEPERS
1 Diego **BENAGLIO** (Swi) (32) 08.09.83
28 Koen **CASTEELS** (Blg) (23) 25.06.92
20 Max **GRUN** (28) 05.04.87

DEFENDERS
6 Carlos **ASCUES** (Per) (23) 19.06.92
18 **DANTE** (Bra) (32) 18.10.83
26 **FELIPE** (Bra) (28) 07.08.87
24 Sebastian **JUNG** (25) 22.06.90
5 Timm **KLOSE** (Swi) (27) 09.05.88
31 Robin **KNOCHE** (23) 22.05.92
25 **NALDO** (Bra) (33) 10.09.82
34 Ricardo **RODRIGUEZ** (Swi) (23) 25.08.92
4 Marcel **SCHAFER** (31) 07.06.84
37 Moritz **SPRENGER** (20) 22.02.95
15 Christian **TRASCH** (28) 01.09.87

MIDFIELDERS
27 Maximilian **ARNOLD** (21) 27.05.94
38 Ismail **AZZAOUI** (Blg) (17) 06.01.98
7 Daniel **CALIGIURI** (Ita) (27) 15.01.88
10 Julian **DRAXLER** (22) 20.09.93
23 Josuha **GUILAVOGUI** (Fra) (25) 19.09.90
22 Luiz **GUSTAVO** (Bra) (28) 23.07.87
35 Francisco **RODRIGUEZ** (Swi) (20) 14.09.95
17 Andre **SCHURRLE** (25) 06.11.90
30 Paul **SEGUIN** (20) 29.03.95
8 **VIERINHA** (Por) (29) 24.01.86

FORWARDS
3 Nicklas **BENDTNER** (Den) (27) 16.01.88
12 Bas **DOST** (Hol) (26) 31.05.89
11 Max **KRUSE** (27) 19.03.88
33 Sebastian **STOLZE** (20) 29.01.95
32 Oskar **ZAWADA** (Pol) (19) 01.02.96

COACH
Dieter **HECKING** (51) 12.09.64

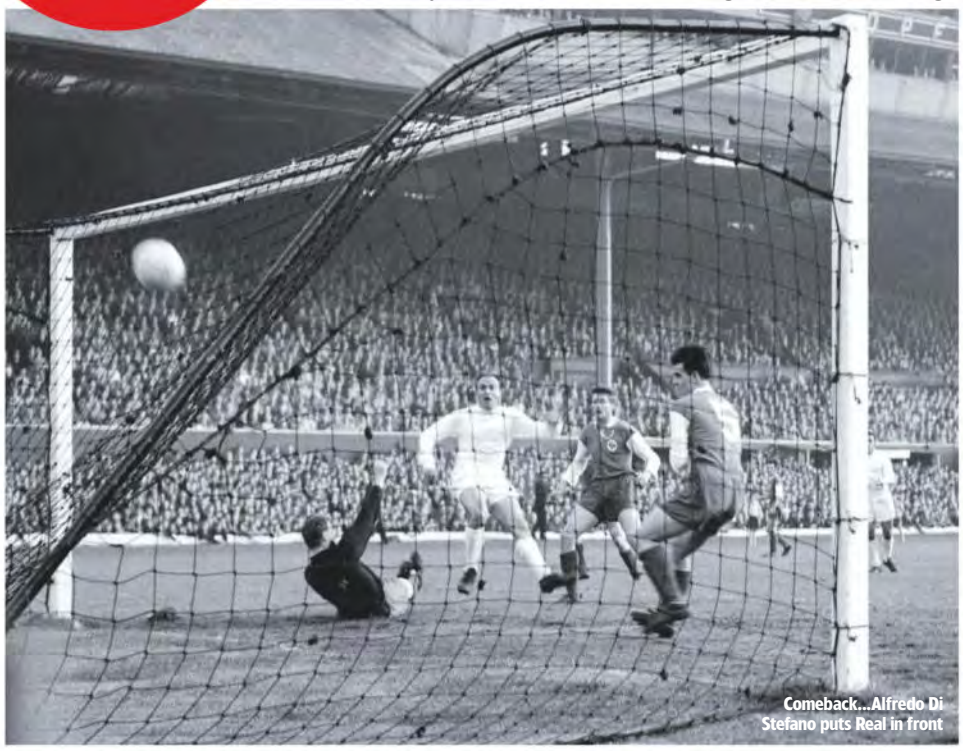
(ages as of 04.12.15)

World Soccer's GREAT MATCHES

MAY 18, 1960, GLASGOW: EUROPEAN CUP FINAL

Real Madrid 7 Eintracht Frankfurt 3

For many, this remains the greatest club game of all time



Comeback...Alfredo Di Stefano puts Real in front

Of Real Madrid's first five European Cup triumphs since the competition's inception in 1956, this performance was, without doubt, the best.

Eintracht Frankfurt, who were champions of Germany, put 12 goals past Rangers in a two-legged semi-final and more than played their part in an epic contest at Hampden Park.

Eric Batty reported in the first-ever edition of *World Soccer*: "As the game opened up, it seemed that Real Madrid had finally met their match, for the Germans opened the scoring and were clearly playing very confidently. But as the game progressed, the pace slowly began to drop as Madrid gained control.

"Suddenly it burst back into life as Di Stefano raced through the middle to meet a square pass from Canario and turn it into goal. They were level.

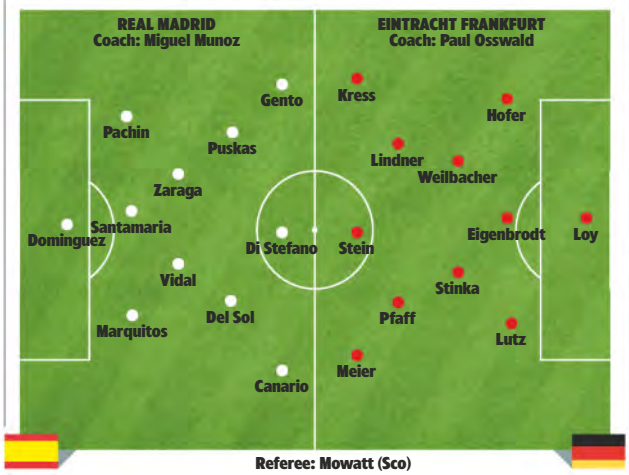
"What happened then was almost inevitable. Casually, effortlessly, Real Madrid ripped great holes in the Frankfurt defence. Di Stefano again, then Puskas. The Spaniards were 3-1 ahead, and all the early doubts were dispelled as Puskas increased the lead with a second-half hat-trick."

Puskas finished the game with four goals, Di Stefano with three, and only one other player in the subsequent 55 Finals – Milan's Pierino Prati in 1969 – has scored a hat-trick in the deciding game.

With Di Stefano also hitting the woodwork twice and Francisco Gento once, Real Madrid could have reached double figures.

In an amazingly open game, in which the offside flag was raised for the first time in the 71st minute, Erwin Stein also scored two late goals, but by then the damage had been done. WS

Champions...Real with the European Cup



Referee: Mowatt (Sco)

KEY MOMENTS

Opener...Richard Kress gives Frankfurt the lead

18min Richard Kress volleys home a cross from Erwin Stein. **0-1**

27min Canario crosses for Alfredo Di Stefano to tap in. **1-1**

30min Luis Del Sol shoots and goalkeeper Egon Loy can only parry the ball into the path of Di Stefano, who scores his second. **2-1**

45min After good work by Del Sol, the ball falls to Ferenc Puskas who fires home left-footed. **3-1**

56min Madrid are awarded a controversial penalty following a gentle shove on Francisco Gento. Puskas converts. **4-1**

60min Gento's cross is headed in by Puskas from close range. **5-1**

71min A wonderful team move is finished off by Puskas with a shot into the top corner for his fourth goal. **6-1**

72min Stein scores for Eintracht with a left-foot shot. **6-2**

73min Di Stefano completes his hat-trick with a shot into the corner. **7-2**

75min A back-pass by Jose Maria Vidal is latched on to by Stein, who turns the ball home. **7-3**

Hat-trick...Ferenc Puskas heads home his third

NEXT MONTH JANUARY ISSUE ON SALE DECEMBER 30

SOCCER CAREER CONFERENCE

January 14-15, 2016
Baltimore, Maryland, USA
During the MLS SuperDraft

SMWW SPORTSMANAGEMENTWORLDWIDE

- Networking with industry leaders
- Career guidance from well-known sports executives
- Meet GM's Scouts, Agents and Front Office Personnel
- Learn career strategies to work in soccer
- Master strategies to catapult your soccer career
- Mentors who want to help you move up the ladder

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Thursday noon: MLS Draft
- Thursday 6-9pm: Opening Night at the NSCAA Exhibit Hall
- Thursday 8pm-10pm: SMWW Welcome Reception: Pratt Street Ale House
- Friday noon: NWSL Draft
- Friday: 9am-5pm: SMWW Soccer Career Conference

Darren Eales
Atlanta President

Matt Martin
Timbers Scouting Director

Tom Glick
NYCFC President

John Print
FIFA Agent

Tommy Smyth
ESPN Soccer Analyst

Lynn Lashbrook
SMWW President

PAST & PRESENT SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Keir Radnedge – Well-known Journalist, WorldSoccer, and Broadcaster

Sky Andrew – Sports Agent (Clients include: Alex Dowsett, Sol Campbell, and Chris Robshaw.)

Aidan Mullally – EPL, Head of Business Development

Tommy Smyth – ESPN Soccer Analyst

Tom Fox – EPL, Chief Executive Officer

Tom Glick – MLS, New York City FC, President

Matt Martin – MLS Portland Timbers, Director of Domestic Scouting

Derek Bragg – Wyscout® and The Scouting Network (TSN)

Darren Eales – MLS, Atlanta United FC, President

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